



confirmation

Manual of Instruction

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Confirmation

Confirmation

A Manual of
Instruction

by

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85286

LONDON

SKEFFINGTON & SON

34 SOUTHAMPTON ST., STRAND, W. C.

Publishers to His Majesty the King

1906

Preface

A FEW years ago I published a manual for Confirmation and first Communion under the title, "Catholic Faith and Practice." The fact that, although an expensive book, it passed through three editions in one year, seemed to indicate that it supplied a need. Many friends, however, expressed the opinion that the book was both too large and too costly for general circulation, and suggested that I should write a smaller and simpler manual. The present little volume is the outcome of this suggestion. It is less than one-third the size of the former book; and while some subjects of general interest have been omitted in it, and the treatment of others cur-

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tailed, yet that part which refers to Confirmation has been considerably enlarged, so as to make it in some respects a more complete manual for Confirmation. It is intended for the more intelligent and educated Confirmation candidates, and perhaps may be useful to the younger clergy to suggest subjects for Confirmation lectures.

The chapters on the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Work of the Holy Ghost, may seem to some a little too theological; but it is thought that there are many preparing for Confirmation who are really desirous of obtaining a fuller knowledge of the great mysteries of faith, and who will therefore prefer a statement which requires careful study, to a superficial exposition of the subject. It is further hoped that after Confirmation this little book may be serviceable for reference, and

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may perhaps even be re-read. To obtain a real grasp of the doctrines of the Faith is an immense help to Christian life; but, like other valuable knowledge, it cannot become our own without some effort and patient study. I have bestowed special attention upon the treatment of the Gifts and the Fruits of the Spirit, in regard to which the instruction in many manuals is very meagre.

A. G. M.

*S. Mark's, Philadelphia,
Advent, 1905.*

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I

The Importance of a Right Preparation for Confirmation

THERE is something specially solemn about an event which can happen only once in a lifetime. Even of the things of this world there are some which come to us but once, and, if we make a mistake about them, we cannot retrieve it ; hence we are taught the importance of recognizing and seizing the opportunities on which success in our business or profession depends.

How much more is this the case in regard to those events which concern our spiritual life, and whose results we

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know must be eternal. These have a solemnity all their own; for in these the loss of an opportunity or its misuse can never be remedied. Such events in the soul's life are the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. None of them can be repeated, because they each impress upon the soul a character which is indelible: in Baptism, the character of the child of God; in Confirmation, of the soldier of Christ; in Holy Orders, of the priesthood.

How terrible, how disastrous, it would be to receive this indelible character, but, from lack of appreciation of its solemnity, to render ourselves incapable of appropriating the grace of the Sacrament, which belongs to the character and would enable us to fulfil its responsibilities!

Is not this the explanation of many

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of the inconsistent, unchrist-like lives which are at once the Church's greatest shame and difficulty? If the history of those lives were traced, how often we should find that Baptism and Confirmation had been received without any realization of the tremendous responsibilities they involved, and therefore without adequate preparation for their proper reception. Such persons receive the "character" conferred by these Sacraments, and so incur the responsibilities attaching to that character; but the grace which accompanies it remains unappropriated, like the seed in the parable of the sower,¹ which fell by the wayside, and, because of the hardness of the ground upon which it fell, never germinated, and therefore produced no fruit. The fault was not so much in the *nature* of the ground

¹S. Luke 8:5.

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upon which it fell as in its *condition* of unpreparedness. If it had been ploughed up like the rest of the field, it might have been the good ground which brought forth fruit an hundredfold.

It is true that the grace of the three Sacraments which convey character (and therefore cannot be repeated) revives as the result of later penitence; but there is the great danger that the penitence which was not sought at the proper season, when those Sacraments were received, may never be sought afterward.

I say nothing here of the preparation for Holy Orders, because it hardly concerns those who are preparing for Confirmation; but I cannot too strongly emphasize the importance of a thorough and careful preparation for Baptism (in the case of an adult) and for Confirmation.

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The Baptism of an adult, how wonderful it is, involving a change from a state of nature to that of grace! S. Paul describes it as “a new creation” (*Kαὶ νῆ κτίσις*); for he says: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”¹ The act implies its result; hence the translation “a new creature” for “a new creation.” As dead matter cannot of itself produce life, so neither can the natural man of himself produce the spiritual life. There must be a new birth, a new creation, and this is accomplished by God working through His *creating* Spirit. The first line of our hymn, “Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,” is in the Latin, “Veni *Creator* Spiritus,” teaching us that the work of grace is a creative work, and that the

¹ 2 Cor. 5 : 17.

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Holy Spirit is its agent. S. Paul refers to this again, where he says, “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”¹ Baptism, then, is a new creation. But what is new? All the gifts of the spiritual life which flow from that union with Christ which Baptism effects.

In adults this great event requires a very special and definite preparation, as taught in our Catechism: “What is required of persons to be baptized? Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and Faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament.”

Both repentance and faith are acts of the will which demand, and, indeed, include, certain intellectual preparation. We cannot adequately repent

¹ Gal. 6:15.

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unless we know not only what our sins are, but how grievous sin is in God's sight; and to know this we must study the teachings of Holy Scripture and the Church in regard to sin. This must be done before we can make the moral act which we call repentance, and which places us in a condition for God to forgive us our sins. In the same way faith embraces the action of both the intellect and the will, for we must know the teachings of the Church before we can make that act of the will which is implied in the statement, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church."

Most of us, however, were baptized as infants, when our Godparents or Sponsors promised for us three things: Repentance, Faith and Obedience. The renewal of vows, therefore, which

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in our service precedes Confirmation, while it does not make those vows any more binding upon us (since nothing can make them more binding), does certainly imply that in our preparation for Confirmation we have considered those promises made for us, and have determined to fulfil them.

For most of us Confirmation is the first occasion on which we are called to turn our thoughts earnestly and stedfastly upon the claims of Christ. I do not forget that some are carefully brought up and instructed by pious parents in Christian doctrine and practice. This is in itself a thing for which to be devoutly thankful. But the very fact that this instruction is gradual, and extends over a long period, makes it quite different in character from the opportunity of Confirmation, when our thoughts for

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a brief season are focussed upon the great step we are about to take, the great gift we are about to receive, and the responsibilities which these involve.

This occasion happens but once in a lifetime, and, if it be neglected, the opportunity of a good preparation for Confirmation is lost forever. And this is the case even though later penitence may cause the grace of Confirmation to revive in us, and later effort may enable us to gain the knowledge of Christ and His Church, which ought to have been acquired at the time of our Confirmation.

It is quite evident, if we follow the teaching of the Catechism, that our preparation must be of two kinds: repentance and faith; for, as Confirmation is the completion of the

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Baptismal gift, so it would seem to demand the same preparation which is required of adult persons for that Sacrament. But repentance and faith, as we have already intimated, involve, first, a work of the intellect, by which we come to know the teachings of Christ and His Church, and then an act of the will, or a moral act, by which we make these teachings practically our own in the spheres of repentance and faith.

Throughout our preparation we must pray earnestly for the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit, whose work it is to enlighten the understanding, to kindle the affections, and to strengthen the will. For this purpose it will be wise to say every day the great hymn of the Holy Ghost.¹

Holy Scripture tells us that our

¹ See page 183.

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Lord said to His disciples, "The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, will guide you into all truth";¹ "He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment";² "He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you";³ "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."⁴ And S. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, assures us that the Holy Ghost will help us in our prayers; for he says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."⁵

Throughout our preparation for Con-

¹S. John 16:13.

²S. John 16:8.

³S. John 16:14.

⁴S. John 14:26.

⁵Rom. 8:26.

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firmation we must remember the importance of prayer, (especially prayer to the Holy Ghost for guidance) and of an earnest desire really to know and to do what is right. Christ said, “Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.” We must try to be sure that we do hunger and thirst after righteousness, that we may secure this promised reward—and be filled with righteousness.

In this little book, then, we shall consider as the preparation for Confirmation:

1. The teachings of the Church about Confirmation and the responsibilities it involves.
2. The way in which we can carry out these teachings by the acts of repentance and faith which our Prayer-book requires.

II

The Incarnation and the Atonement

THE doctrine of the Incarnation is the keystone of the Christian religion. It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of a really clear and adequate grasp of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ; for on it rests almost all Christianity, and from it flow nearly all the doctrines of the Church. Some would say that the *two* great doctrines of Christianity are the Incarnation and the Atonement, and in a sense this would be true; yet the division is not a logical one, since the doctrine of the Atonement is included in the doctrine of the Incarnation. If the existence of sin and fallen human nature be granted, the Incarna-

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tion issues necessarily in the Atonement upon the Cross. From these two doctrines flow all the Sacraments, since they are, as theologians teach us, extensions of the Incarnation ; that is, means of grace whereby the results of the Incarnation and the merits of our Lord's Atonement extend to and reach each baptized soul.

There are, however, many Christians who have but a very imperfect idea of what is meant by the Incarnation. Much of the heresy which has prevailed in the world, as well as much of the schism which has rent the Body of Christ, may be traced to inadequate knowledge of this doctrine. The Incarnation is to us, first, the great revelation of God ; for in Christ “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”¹ But the Incarnation is also the great

¹ Col. 2:9.

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revelation of man, of his strength, of his possibilities for good—man as God made him and meant him to be. In fallen man we are able to study human nature only as marred and distorted by sin, which is an element foreign to man according to God's original purpose; but in Christ we see the perfect Man, in whom God's purpose is adequately realized. The most concise statement of the doctrine of the Incarnation is contained in the fourteenth verse of the first chapter of the Gospel of S. John: “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” The whole of his Gospel and Epistles is but an amplification of this text.

The Incarnation was the taking of manhood into God, not by a fusion of the human and divine natures, but by the uniting of both (while each nature was kept perfectly distinct) in the One

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Person of the Word, the Eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Ever-Blessed Trinity.

The means by which this was accomplished was the operation of the Holy Ghost upon the substance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, by which act the Word became the Son of Man without being the Son of *a* man; and so took into Himself humanity without taking Adam's taint of original sin. This virgin-birth of Christ is not only an article of faith in the Church, but it also commends itself to our reason as the only way, so far as we can see, in which the purpose of the Incarnation could be accomplished and humanity taken into God apart from the taint of Adam's sin. And so the Creed tells us that our Lord was made "Man," not "a man." It was manhood, not a man, —human *nature*, not a human *person*,

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that the Son of God took into union with Himself; and it is of the utmost importance to any clear understanding of the Incarnation to grasp this.

By human "nature" we mean all those qualities which the race has in common; by a human "person" we mean a separate individual, possessing that distinct and sovereign power of action in the soul to which we give the name of "personality." Now Adam did not transmit to his descendants his own personality, for that is incommunicable; but he did transmit his nature. No human being can part with his own personality, or share it with another. When Adam begat sons and daughters he passed on to his offspring his own nature, but his personality remained exclusively his own for ever, and his descendants each had his or her own personality.

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Personality, then, is no essential part of human nature, but human nature is organized on a new personality in every individual. It is therefore not so difficult to understand that in order to cut off the entail of that tainted *moral* nature which we derive from Adam, and to make the Hypostatic Union of the Divine and human natures possible, the germ of humanity which was derived from Adam through the Blessed Virgin was vitalized by the direct operation of the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Life-Giver. Moreover, instead of being, as it is with us, united to a new human personality, *that* human nature was taken up into the personality of the Word. Thus all that was essential to humanity was taken up by the Second Adam, and the differences between our Lord's Humanity and ours,—*that* He had no human

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father, no human *person*, and no *sin*,—are none of them differences which touch in any way the integrity and perfection of His Human Nature.

Had man not fallen, the Incarnation would probably have been necessary in order to take man, and in him the whole world, into God ; but this Incarnation would have involved no suffering or pain. But man having fallen before God's loving purpose for him could be fulfilled, he must be redeemed, bought back from his bondage, delivered from his sin, reunited once more to God, so that the Divine Life might flow again in his weakened nature.

In speaking of the doctrine of the Atonement, we must call attention to the great complexity of the ideas represented by this Truth, and to the many aspects in which this doctrine

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must be regarded in order that we may obtain an adequate view of the work done for us by our Blessed Lord upon the Cross.

I. We must observe that the Atonement is spoken of in Holy Scripture as a *propitiation*. S. Paul, writing to the Christians at Rome, speaking of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, says, “Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation* through faith in His Blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”¹ And S. John says, “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the *propitiation* for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”²

We may here ask, What gave to the

¹ Rom. 3 : 25.

² 1 S. John 2 : 1, 2.

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Death of Christ its propitiatory value, and our answer will lead us to regard propitiation from three points of view :

1. We must carefully distinguish between the *fact* of our Lord's Death and that inner act of His Will which gave to His Death its propitiatory value. S. Bernard expresses the distinction thus: "Not His Death, but His willing acceptance of death, was pleasing to God."

Throughout the New Testament we observe that special stress is laid upon the perfect obedience manifested in the Life and Death of Christ. For instance, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, commenting on the prophecy in the Fortieth Psalm, says, "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said He,

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Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God.
. . . *By the which Will we are sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all.*¹

That the perfect obedience manifested in the Passion and Death of our Lord was the element which gave to the Sacrifice its propitiatory value, will be more readily appreciated when it is remembered that the essence of man's sin was from the first disobedience, the rebellion of the human will against God. The obedience shown in the Life of Christ was on the Cross manifested in death. He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."²

2. A further element of propitiation may be discerned in the Death of our Lord; for the law of righteousness, which is the justice of God, de-

¹ Heb. 10 : 8-10.

² Phil. 2 : 8.

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mands not only obedience in the present but expiation for the past. This great truth is constantly forgotten in the practical lives of Christians in the present day. The world has a saying about "turning over a new leaf," and the devil too often persuades men that to turn over a new leaf, to break off from old sins and to lead a moral life, is by itself sufficient. And yet this is of no avail, unless there is also the blotting out of the transgressions of the past.

3. We must add to these two considerations a third. We find both in the Old Testament prophecies and in the New Testament narrative of our Lord's work, that the Death of Christ (even apart from the obedience which it manifested) occupies a unique place. The frequent declaration that it was *necessary*, that "it behooved Christ"

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to die, points to something exceptional in His Death. And there can be no question that death was a necessary factor in the idea of sacrifice for sin, and that the ceremonial of the slaying of the victim points to an expiatory significance in death itself.

So that while we may still recognize that it was the spirit of obedience and voluntary submission which gave atoning value to the Death of Christ, yet the necessity of death as the appointed consummation of His obedience must not be overlooked. “Had He not obeyed He could not have atoned ; but had He not died obedience would have lacked just that element which made it an atonement for sin.”

II. Another element which has been greatly misunderstood, is the *vicarious* character of our Blessed Lord’s sufferings. Indeed it is on this

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that cavillers have founded their charge of injustice and immorality against the Church's teaching of the Atonement; for, they say, how can it be just that an innocent person should suffer for a guilty one? How can the justice of God be satisfied with such a substitution? There can, however, be no question that this is the teaching of Holy Scripture. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."¹

Without pretending to make this mystery clear, which would be impossible, we may point out three things which may remove some of the difficulty involved in it.

1. The circumstance that the

¹ Is. 53: 5.

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Victim was a self-offered one, a willing one, makes the greatest difference in regard to the question of injustice to the sufferer.

2. The principle of vicarious suffering is one which is to be found in life and in nature always,—the mother suffering for her child, the father paying his son's debts. And we must carefully remember that in these cases, as in the great fact which they illustrate, vicarious suffering is of no moral advantage to him for whom it is borne unless he distinctly appropriates it to himself by an act of his own. The mediation which obtains mercy for the criminal is ineffective unless it also produces a change in him. In like manner the vicarious suffering of Christ for our sins is of no value to us as individuals unless we appropriate the merits of His

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Passion by using the means of grace which flow from it.

3. We must bear in mind that the substitution implied something more than a mere artificial relation between the Victim and him for whom He suffered. Our Lord Jesus Christ was our Representative from the fact that He had taken human nature into Himself. And this human nature was so real and so perfect that He was involved, so to speak, in all the consequences of the sin which is so tremendous a factor in human life—even to the enduring of the very sufferings and death which in us are the penal results and final outcome of sin, but which in Him were the instruments of His free self-sacrifice. He is our Representative thus perfectly because He is both man and more than man, and

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can therefore perform for us what we could not and cannot perform for ourselves.

III. Another element of Christ's Atonement is its power to restore the broken union between God and man, both by reconciling us to God and by reconciling God to us; the first by delivering us from the sin which separated us absolutely from God; the second by conveying to us the Divine gift of life, which had been forfeited by sin. S. Athanasius says, "By the Sacrifice of His own Body He both *put an end to the law* which was against us, and gave us *a fresh beginning of life*, in that He bestowed on us the hope of resurrection."

By the righteousness of Christ, imparted through the Sacraments, and the appropriation of these through the coöperation of the human will, man is

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enabled, as it were, to weave into his very character the righteousness of Christ, and so to obtain “the wedding-garment required of God in Holy Scripture.”

IV. In treating of the Atonement, we must not forget that our Lord’s Death is continually spoken of in the New Testament in close connection with His Resurrection and Ascension. Our Lord Himself declares that He died in order to rise again: “I lay down My life, that I might take it again.”¹ So, too, S. Paul teaches that the Resurrection is the necessary completion of the process which was begun by death: “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”²

Hence another element in the Atone-

¹ S. John 10 : 17.

² Rom. 4 : 25. Cf. Rom. 6 : 4 ; Rom. 8 : 34.

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ment is the perpetual intercession of our Blessed Lord at the right hand of the Father in Heaven, which constitutes Him our Mediator and our Great High Priest.

III

Grace

THERE are four spheres, the control of which God has entrusted to His Church,—the spheres of truth, morals, worship and grace. The Church is empowered not only to teach man what is true, and what is right, and how to worship God, but also to dispense grace, which alone can enable man to believe what is true, to do what is right, and to attain his true end, which is, to serve God faithfully here, and to live with God happily hereafter.

The Mosaic dispensation, so far as it went, was a revelation of truth, morals, and the law of worship; and

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the Jew had no reason to complain that he did not know the law of God, which was “holy, just and good”; but he found by bitter experience that, although he knew the law, he had not strength to obey it.

In the spheres of truth, morals, and worship, the Church of Christ differs from that of the Old Covenant only in degree. Where Christianity differs absolutely from Judaism, and all other religions, is that it dispenses grace. As Holy Scripture teaches us, “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”¹ The Church claims not only to show man the way to heaven but also to give him power to make the journey—to enlighten his intellect, and to strengthen his will, that he may be able to say with S. Paul, “I can do all things

¹S. John 1:17.

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through Christ which strengtheneth me.”¹

Grace is the fruit of the Incarnation and the Atonement. For by the Incarnation and the Atonement our Blessed Lord merited for man all forms of grace, and this grace is chiefly dispensed (through the ministry of the Church) to those individuals who seek it in the appointed channels of the Sacraments. There is, of course, besides this a direct bestowal of grace in response to prayer and good works. By the death of Christ the human race, which in Adam had fallen from a state of righteousness, was restored to that grace and glory which had been lost by the Fall. For the supernatural end of man is the life of glory or the enjoyment of the Beatific Vision, and it is by *grace* that he is prepared

¹ Phil. 4:13.

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for this end. So that grace is, as it were, the principle and beginning, but glory the end and consummation, of man as restored by Christ.

By this outpouring of grace into the world, as many as receive it are lifted again to the supernatural state. For “as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.”¹ The difference therefore between the natural and supernatural man is *grace*. By grace man through Baptism is elevated to the supernatural state, and though by wilful sin he may forfeit the privileges of that state, he cannot lose the character it confers.

In the Christian life grace is present always, and permeates every action that is worthy of being called a Christian act as done for love of Christ; for while it is untrue to say with

¹ S. John 1:12.

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Luther that all works not done in the power of grace are *sins*, and so are displeasing to God, yet it is true that no work is meritorious, and therefore pleasing to God, which is not done through grace.

But what do we mean by grace? The word is employed in many senses. But in the strict sense, grace is a supernatural gift freely bestowed by God on a rational creature, and pertaining in some way to eternal life. It is in this sense that the word is ordinarily used in theology. Grace taken in this strict sense may be regarded in its operations from many points of view. We shall confine ourselves to the consideration of only a few of these.

In regard to its *purpose or end* grace is twofold: (1) The grace which is "freely given" to individuals for the edification of the Church, and which

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can exist even when the recipient is in a state of mortal sin ; as, for instance, the gifts of the priesthood, which even an unworthy priest possesses and can use for the benefit of others. (2) The grace which makes the individual "pleasing" to God, and is given chiefly for his own sanctification.

In regard to its *object* grace is distinguished into (1) Habitual and (2) Actual grace. That grace is termed *Habitual* which is an abiding habit or quality in the soul of man, rendering him righteous and pleasing to God. It is also called *Sanctifying* grace or *Justifying* grace, and to it are joined "infused virtues," and gifts of the Holy Spirit. *Actual* grace is a special grace imparted by way of isolated or transient action for a special purpose ; for instance, the grace to meet a special temptation, or to make some great

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sacrifice, or to accomplish some important work.

The chief means of grace are the Sacraments. They are an extension of the Incarnation; that is, they are the means instituted by Christ in His Church, by which the merits of His Incarnation and Atonement are brought to bear upon each individual soul. Christ became Incarnate, and died on the Cross and rose again, to redeem the whole world. He thus became the fountain of merit and grace for every man. But a channel is necessary to convey this grace from the fountain to us as individuals, and that channel is supplied by the Sacraments of the Church.

The word “Sacrament” has been variously described. Our Catechism defines it as “an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace

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given unto us, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof."

The history of the word sacrament is interesting. It comes from a Latin word, "sacramentum," which was used in many senses by the Romans, but always with the idea of *religious sanction*. First, we find that by a law of L. Papinius, both parties in a lawsuit were required to deposit a certain sum of money with the priests, and he who won the suit received his money back, while the deposit of the loser was used in providing public sacrifices. Again, we learn that "sacramentum" was the word used for the oath by which the Roman soldier bound himself to be faithful to his commander, as distinguished from the civil oath, "jusjurandum." It was also the oath by which

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members of corporations or societies bound themselves to their mutual obligations.

Its earliest application to the Christian Sacraments is probably to be found in the epistle of Pliny to Trajan, A. D. 104, where he says that Christians bound themselves by an oath (sacramento) not to commit any crime, etc. It is a very striking fact that a heathen should have anticipated the later terminology of the Christian Church.

The word used as its equivalent by the Greek Church is “mystery” (*μυστήριον*). This points, in the first place, to the discipline of secrecy which was observed in the instruction of catechumens for Baptism; then to that feeling of awe which is excited by objects of great solemnity; and, thirdly, to the realization that in the

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“mystery” there is more than the mind of man can grasp.

In the early Church, however, the use of the word “sacrament” was by no means confined to what we now call Sacraments. For example, S. Cyprian speaks of the practice of morning prayer as a sacrament. But in the twelfth century the word had come to have its present limitations, and from that time has been accepted by the Church both in the East and the West.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that Sacraments are not mere empty signs or symbols of something which is absent. They are the channels by which the spiritual gift is conveyed to our souls, and, as our Catechism says, “a pledge to assure us thereof.” The Christian Sacraments, therefore, do not merely *signify* grace; they ac-

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tually *confer* it. Hence they are called “effectual” signs of grace.

The number of the Sacraments is universally held to be seven. Both the Greek and the Roman Churches enumerate seven Sacraments, and our Church in the twenty-fifth Article does the same, though it distinguishes between the two Sacraments called “Sacraments of the Gospel,” which are generally necessary to salvation, and the other “five commonly called Sacraments”; for all of which, except Unction, provision is made in the Prayer-book.

The Author of the Sacraments is God. No material rite could possibly be capable of conferring grace except through an act of the Divine Will. Not even Christ, regarded only as Man, had power to institute a Sacrament. But as the Son of God made

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Man, having redeemed man by the Sacrifice of His Death, and made satisfaction for the sins of the world, He merited grace for that humanity which He had assumed. He therefore received power to institute Sacraments as instruments by which the grace which He earned for men might be applied to them individually. And so, when referring to the Sacrament of Baptism, He says, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth";¹ and to that of Absolution, "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins."²

Since no external rite can have the power of conferring grace except by the institution of God, it follows that there is no power in the Church, acting on her own account, to institute a Sacrament. The Church can neither

¹ S. Matt. 28:18.

² S. Matt. 9:6.

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make new Sacraments, nor in any way change those which Christ has instituted; although she may ordain the ceremonies which shall be used in their ministration.

For every Sacrament four things are required; (1) the matter, (2) the form, (3) the minister, and (4) the subject. The *matter* is the outward sign; the *form* that which determines the matter to its special use or purpose. For instance, water may exist for many purposes,—to quench thirst, or to cleanse; but in Baptism the use of the form, or words ordained by Christ, determines that particular water to be “the laver of regeneration,” for “the mystical washing away of sin.”¹

Every Sacrament must have as its *minister* a living human being. In Baptism this is the only qualification

¹ Baptismal Office.

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required ; for in cases of *necessity* a lay person, whether man or woman, may baptize. Such Baptism is valid, though irregular, if done without necessity. In Matrimony any *baptized* man and woman who are capable of intermarriage can and do administer the Sacrament of Matrimony to each other. The priest simply witnesses the contract as the Church's representative, and bestows the Church's benediction on the union ; so that the priest does not, strictly speaking, "marry" people, but solemnizes their marriage. In all the other Sacraments, however, it is necessary that the minister should be in valid Orders, that is, be a priest or a bishop.

The *subject*, or recipient, of a Sacrament must be a living human being, and for all Sacraments except Baptism must have been baptized, and, as a

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general rule, must have some kind of intention to receive the benefit of the Sacrament.

For the efficacy of a Sacrament in the individual there must be right dispositions; for instance, for Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion there must be penitence and a purpose to use the grace conferred.

We have already pointed out that there are three Sacraments which impress character: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders. These can be received but once; they can never be repeated. The other Sacraments, which do not convey character, can be repeated.

Again, some Sacraments are “generally necessary to salvation,” and others, while necessary in some cases, are not universally so. Our Catechism places under the first head the Sacraments

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of Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, which it says are “generally (or universally) necessary to salvation.”

This, however, is not an entirely accurate statement. Baptism is the only Sacrament which is absolutely necessary to salvation, for it conveys the “new birth,” and a person can have no life who has not been born. This supernatural life is given to the soul by incorporation into Christ through Baptism, and by virtue of this union with Christ we *mystically* feed upon His Flesh and Blood, though not, strictly speaking, by a sacramental act, yet to our soul’s health. Hence it is “that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved,” since they have received the gift of life by Baptism, and have been enabled to feed upon Christ⁴ by virtue of their incorporation

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into His Body. So that if we say that the Holy Eucharist is generally necessary to salvation, we mean that without the help of that Sacrament salvation would be so difficult to attain as to be practically impossible.

From this it follows that sectarians, who have no valid Eucharist but who die in a state of grace, will be saved, not by the *uncovenanted* mercies of God, but through sacramental grace,—the grace of their Baptism, if they have preserved it, and also probably the grace of *spiritual* Communion,—where their religious errors have been caused by invincible ignorance.

The twenty-fifth Article of Religion places the other five Sacraments in a lower class, and gives as its reason “that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.” They are not necessary to salvation in the

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same sense as the two greater Sacra-
ments, since they are not necessary for
every one. Confirmation is the com-
pletion of Baptism, and though the
gifts of the Holy Ghost which it con-
fers are of immense help to the Chris-
tian in his warfare in this world, it is
not *absolutely* necessary, since it cannot
always be obtained; as, for instance,
by those who have grown up in a coun-
try where there is no Bishop within
their reach.

IV

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CONFIRMATION follows Baptism in the order of the Sacraments, and is to be considered a Sacrament distinct from Baptism, conveying its own character and grace, although it is closely connected with Baptism, of which it is the completion, since it perfects what was begun in that Sacrament.

The title “Confirmation” is derived from its effect in strengthening the soul by the gifts of the Holy Ghost. In Holy Scripture it is also called the “Seal of the Lord,” from the fact that it conveys a special character;¹ and it is described as one of the four principles of the doctrine of Christ under the name of “the laying on of hands.”²

¹ Eph. 1:13; 4:30.

² Cf. Heb. 6:1.

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Like all the Sacraments Confirmation was instituted by our Blessed Lord. For, although we have no express account of its institution in the Gospels, we find the Apostles ministering Confirmation immediately after Pentecost, and, as we have already pointed out, the Church has no power of instituting a Sacrament. Some think that it was instituted during the Great Forty Days between our Lord's Resurrection and Ascension ; others, that its institution took place on the night of Maundy Thursday, in connection with our Lord's discourses concerning the gift of the Holy Ghost ; others, again, consider that it was included in the gift of Easter Day, when our Lord breathed on the Apostles, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”¹ These, however, are but theological opinions.

¹ S. John 20 : 22.

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It has abundant New Testament authority. It is symbolized by Christ's action in blessing little children;¹ we have two accounts of it in the Book of Acts,² and it is described, as we have already noticed, as one of the four principles of the doctrine of Christ. It is recognized as one of the Sacraments of the Church, a service being provided for its administration, and in the Articles it is ranked among the "five commonly called Sacraments."³ Its outward sign is the laying on of hands; its inward grace, the special gifts of the Holy Ghost.

In regard to the *matter* or outward sign of the Sacrament of Confirmation, there is some difference of opinion, our Church requiring only the laying on of the Bishop's hands, the Greek

¹ Cf. S. Mark 10:14; S. Luke 18:16.

² Cf. Acts 14:2-8; 19:2-7.

³ Art. 25.

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Church only the anointing with the oil of chrism, and the Roman Church, by its present rubric, enjoining both. Since no matter seems to have been expressly ordained of Christ, probably no one of these uses can be said to be valid to the exclusion of the others. The laying on of hands, however, is the only outward sign mentioned in Holy Scripture.

The *form* in Confirmation consists of words which signify the purpose of the laying on of hands; *i. e.*, that it is to administer Confirmation. This is necessary since the laying on of hands is also used as the outward sign in the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Different forms are used in the Roman, Greek, and Anglican Communions. In the Roman the form is: "I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross, and confirm thee with the Chrism of Salvation, in the Name of the Father,

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and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.” In the Greek Church it is: “The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Ghost.” In our own Church it is: “Defend, O Lord, this Thy child with Thy heavenly grace, that he may continue Thine forever; and daily increase in Thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto Thy everlasting Kingdom. Amen.” As there is no form expressly given in Holy Scripture, the form used is only of ecclesiastical authority.

The ordinary *minister* of Confirmation is the Bishop, although in the Greek Church priests confirm by anointing with chrism which has been previously blessed by a Bishop.

The *subject* of Confirmation is any baptized person, since an unbaptized person is incapable of receiving any Sacrament except Baptism. In the

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early Church Confirmation seems to have been administered immediately after Baptism, and such is the practice at the present time in the Greek Church, where an infant is confirmed immediately after it is baptized. In the Western Church, however, for a long period Confirmation has not been administered until the child has attained to years of discretion. In the case of the Baptism of an adult, Confirmation should follow as soon afterward as may be convenient.

The disposition needed for Confirmation is that we should be in a state of grace; that is, that we should not have lost our Baptismal grace, or, if by mortal sin we have been so unfortunate as to have lost it, that it should have been renewed by penitence. This is made very clear in the prayer of the Bishop in the Confirmation Office: "Al-

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mighty and ever-living God, Who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and *hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins.*" This prayer is probably part of the "form" of the Sacrament.

Confirmation rightly received has two effects. First, the sealing or stamping of a certain "character" upon the soul. This character, as distinct from that of Baptism, is the military character of the soldier of Christ. And, as we have already noticed, because it conveys character, Confirmation cannot be repeated; though the *grace* of the Sacrament revives, that is, begins to work, as soon as the obstacle of sin has been removed by penitence. Those, therefore, who approach Confirmation without right dispositions receive in the Sacrament a

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character, and, potentially, the grace, which, however, is ineffectual until they repent.

Secondly, Confirmation confers its own special grace, or the grace of the Sacrament, which consists in the special protection and aid of the Holy Ghost through the fulness of His Sevenfold Gift, by which the grace of Baptism is perfected.

We have now described what Confirmation is. We must go on to point out what it is not, since there is a very common error which makes Confirmation to consist in the “renewal of Baptismal vows.” It is difficult to understand how any thoughtful person could possibly fall into this mistake, but experience teaches that it is very prevalent; so that it is important not merely to mention it but also to show clearly how erroneous it is. This is an

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easy task, since the very phrase “to be confirmed” in itself refutes the error. If Confirmation consists in the “renewal of Baptismal vows,” a person does not come to *be confirmed* but to confirm—his or her vows. The Prayer-book, however, speaks more than once both in the office of Baptism, and in that of Confirmation, of those who are “*to be confirmed*” by the Bishop.

But there is a stronger argument than this; namely, that the provision for the renewal of Baptismal vows is not found in any Confirmation Service in the Catholic Church except in that of the Anglican Communion, and it was put into the English Prayer-book only at its last revision.¹ The first three English Prayer-books, therefore, did not contain such provision. It is also entirely unrecognized in the Scriptural

¹ A. D. 1662.

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accounts of Confirmation. So that while the “renewal of vows” may be considered a very beautiful and fitting prelude to Confirmation, it has nothing whatever to do with the Sacrament itself.

We may think that the “*Gloria in Excelsis*” is a very beautiful part of the Communion Office, but we know that it is not found in any ancient liturgy, that it is not used in any liturgy of the Greek Church (and in the Roman Church only on festivals), and that in the American Prayer-book there is a rubric allowing the substitution of a hymn in its place. Hence we see that, beautiful though the “*Gloria in Excelsis*” may be, it is no integral or necessary part of the Communion Office.

In the same way we must admit that while the “renewal of Baptis-

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“*mal vows*” is a very fitting *preparation* for the administration of Confirmation, it has no necessary connection with it, and must not be confounded with Confirmation itself. The Divines of the English Church, who in 1662 added the renewal of vows to the Confirmation Service, doubtless did so because, Confirmation being the completion of the Sacrament of Baptism, they thought it helpful to remind those to be confirmed, of the vows which they had taken in Baptism; and to call upon them to renew those vows was a very forcible way of bringing the obligations undertaken in Baptism to their remembrance.

We cannot too clearly assert that Confirmation is something done to us, a gift bestowed upon us, and not something which we do ourselves. We are confirmed by the Bishop, and, through

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his ministrations, ultimately by the Holy Ghost who bestows upon us His Sevenfold Gift.

V

The Operations of the Holy Ghost

BEFORE we speak of the work of the Holy Ghost it will be well to utter a word of caution about a common view of the Godhead, which is practically Tritheism, and which by its excess gives occasion to the Unitarianism which we all deplore.

There is only one God ; but in the unity of the Godhead there are three Persons ; Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The Father is the *Source* from whom *proceed* the Son and the Holy Ghost. Of these two processions the one is by an act of the intellect which we call “Generation”—thus proceeds the only Begotten Son ; the other is by an act

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of the will—by this proceeds the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father only, as from the source, fountain or beginning, but He proceeds *through* the Son. Being mutually breathed forth by the Father and the Son, He is, as it were, the bond of union in the eternal Trinity, the love of the Father and the Son. The Father is regarded as the manifestation of the power, the Son of the intellect, the Holy Ghost of the will, of the God-head.

Here, however, we must notice the doctrine of the “Circumincession” which specially guards our view of the Holy Trinity from Tritheism. This doctrine expresses the coexistence and presence of the Persons of the Holy Trinity in one another by reason of their identity of nature and essence; as our Lord said, “I am in the Father,

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and the Father in Me";¹ and again, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."² This entire passage proves (1) the distinction of the Persons as against the Sabellians; (2) their equality as against the Arians, and (3) the oneness of their nature as against the Tritheists.

A similar identity may be observed in a passage of S. Paul: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the *Spirit of God* dwell in you. Now if any man have not the *Spirit of Christ*, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the *Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead* dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by

¹ S. John 14:11.

² S. John 14:9.

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His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”¹ In this passage the Spirit is spoken of as the “Spirit of God,” *i. e.*, the Holy Ghost; the “Spirit of Christ”; and the “Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead,” *i. e.*, the Father. Thus S. Paul speaks of all three Persons of the Holy Trinity, under the term “Spirit,” as taking part in the work of man’s sanctification.

Again we may observe the working of this doctrine in the fact that creation is ascribed (1) to the Father: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”;² (2) to the Son: “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made”;³ and (3) to the Holy Ghost: “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was

¹ Rom. 8:9-11.

² Gen. 1:1.

³ S. John 1:3.

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upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”¹

The explanation of this is that there is but one undivided will in the three Persons, but in this unity of action it has pleased God to observe a certain order in the accomplishment of His purposes. So the Holy Ghost is the Agent of creation “as the Lord and Life-giver.” S. Basil has described this special aspect of His work as “the perfecting of the works of God”; not that God’s works are originally imperfect, but that they possess latent powers of development which the Holy Ghost unfolds. They are also often marred by the interference of the Evil One, and the Holy Ghost restores them. We see this in the material world and in the Fall of man; in both there has

¹ Gen. 1 : 2.

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been a restoration after ruin. But it is more especially in perfecting and developing man that the work of the Holy Ghost is manifested. In regard to the human race, we may observe three stages of this development: (I) from the Fall to the Incarnation; (II) the Incarnation itself; (III) from Pentecost to the end of the world.

I. From the Fall we see the Holy Ghost acting on man's conscience, convincing him of sin, and revealing to him the law of God through the Mosaic dispensation, which speaks of moral and ceremonial law, and judgments; for we read of "the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments."¹ And S. Paul refers to the law under three titles, as "holy, and just, and good."² Holy refers to the ritual or ceremonial law—the law of worship;

¹ Deut. 7: 11.

² Rom. 7: 12.

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just, to the judicial law,—judgments; good, to the moral law.

Again, during this period the Holy Ghost “spake by the prophets,” making known gracious promises, warning of dangers, and declaring God’s judgments for sins committed. During these ages we see the work of the Holy Spirit, brooding over the fallen race of man as He brooded over the material chaos described in Genesis, and out of both the moral and material chaos bringing order, and preparing for the Incarnation.

II. The second stage of His work is manifested in the Incarnation. Here He is the Agent, and the Blessed Virgin Mary the instrument. There is the same brooding, the same overshadowing; for we read that the angel said unto Mary, “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the

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power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”¹ He Who had brooded over the primeval chaos, when God said, “Let there be light, and there was light,” brooded over the moral chaos of *our* nature, when God again said, “Let there be light,” and the Son Who was “God of God, Light of Light,” leaped into the world of darkness and became the Light of the world.

III. The last stage of His work begins at Pentecost and will continue until the Church is perfected, and Christ comes to judge the world. Now we see the Holy Ghost working in the Church and in the individual soul,—from without by the operation of God’s Providence, order-

¹ S. Luke 1: 35.

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ing their environment; from within by grace, furnishing strength to meet and bear their difficulties, and so developing their latent powers, until both the Church and the individual soul are sanctified and perfected.

The feast of All Saints' Day tells of the consummation of the work of the Holy Ghost, the celebration of all His triumphs; for it not only commemorates the Saints who have lived and died and won their crowns, but also foreshadows that great All Saints' festival when all the Saints of Christ constituting the Church Triumphant shall reign in the Kingdom of His love in Eternity.

Before Pentecost the work of the Holy Ghost in man was in a sense "ab extra" and transient. Since then there has been an indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the baptized soul, and a per-

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manent operation of His gifts. And since these gifts are specially bestowed in Confirmation it behooves us to consider them in detail and very carefully.

The prophet Isaiah in a wonderful description of the peaceable Kingdom of the Messiah, describing the Messiah Himself, says : “ And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord ; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.”¹

Here we must observe that though the “ fear of the Lord ” is mentioned twice, the Hebrew phrase has evidently two meanings, “ piety ” and “ holy fear.” Both the Septuagint and the Vulgate thus translate it. These two gifts are mutually complementary, Holy

¹ Is. 11 : 2, 3.

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Fear being an inward manifestation of the gift of the Holy Ghost, and “true Godliness” or Piety being its outward exhibition toward God and man.

The title Messiah, which is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek word Christ, signifies “the Anointed One,” and is derived from the unction of the Holy Spirit, of which Isaiah speaks, and which was to impart to Him the Seven Gifts of the Spirit. This anointing took place at the first moment of our Lord’s Incarnation, and these gifts are the endowment of Christ—not as the Son of God, but as the Son of Man, the second Adam, the Representative Man, the Perfect or Archetypal Man, the Head of the race.

In Him we see the *perfect* manifestation of these gifts of the Spirit. But they are not confined to Him ; for the

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anointing of our Great High Priest is shared by every member of His Body, and these gifts are “like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down unto the beard: even unto Aaron’s beard, and went down to the skirts of his clothing.”¹ These gifts are found, therefore, in Christ’s Church, in which we may study their *corporate* manifestation. They are found also in each of His members, in whom is seen their *individual* operation.

Man after the Fall did not become totally depraved, as Calvin and Luther teach. We are created in God’s image, and its traces, though defaced by original sin, are still manifest in us. Men have at all times obeyed to some extent the dictates of conscience and natural religion. Hence we find, even before the Incarnation, and amongst the

¹ Ps. 133 : 2.

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heathen, a manifestation of the four Natural or, as they are generally called, Cardinal¹ virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance. Solon and Thales were Prudent; Aris-tides was Just, and the laws of Pagan Rome exhibited this spirit to such a degree that they became the basis of modern jurisprudence; Regulus and Decius Mus and Leonidas showed For-titude of the highest kind; while Mar-cus Aurelius, Seneca and many of the later Stoics exhibited Temperance or Self-control.

The effects of the Fall, however, pre-
vent the unaided Natural virtues from
having any wide-spread result upon
humanity at large. Therefore to them
were added at the Incarnation the three
Supernatural or Theological virtues:

¹ From “cardo,” a hinge, because upon these virtues every human act hinges.

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Faith, Hope and Charity. These are infused into us with the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost in Baptism, wherein we are incorporated into the Manhood of Christ and share its endowments, the gifts of the Spirit being bestowed in all their fulness through Confirmation which is the completion of Baptism.

We must draw attention, however, to the fact that while we often speak of the *Sevenfold* Gifts of the Holy Ghost, we are using language which is not strictly accurate, since there is only One Gift, which is the Holy Ghost, but that Gift is sevenfold in its operation. We must not, therefore, think of any division in the Holy Ghost, but a division in man corresponding to the different faculties of his soul; so that there are, as it were, seven channels into which the Holy

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Ghost flows in man, and through which He operates, thus producing what we call the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. We have a type of this in Zechariah's candlestick, which is described as having seven lamps, all supplied by the one bowl, but producing a sevenfold light.¹

Before we proceed to the treatment of the gifts in detail, it will be well to draw attention to certain points of view from which they may be regarded.

First, they may be divided into "intellectual" and "moral" gifts: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel and Knowledge perfecting the intellect of man; while Ghostly Strength, Piety, and Holy Fear perfect his will. The latter gifts are capable of subdivision: Ghostly Strength pertaining exclusively

¹ Zech. 4:2.

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to the will; Piety and Holy Fear reaching the will through the affections which they sanctify.

Again, we may regard the Seven Gifts as Seven powers of the soul, which call forth and direct the activities of the supernatural virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. Faith is the province of the intellect, and is aided by the four intellectual gifts, Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel and Knowledge; Hope, of the will, which is stimulated by Ghostly Strength; Love, of the affections which are kindled by Piety and Holy Fear,—Piety promoting the outward manifestation of love toward God and man, and Fear its inner manifestation in the soul. The Seven Gifts are thus seen to illuminate the reason, to sanctify the affections, and to perfect the will.

While the Seven Gifts are insepa-

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rable, yet we find in different individuals some one gift specially developed and producing a characteristic manifestation or attainment in a certain class of persons, for the edification of the Church. We have examples of this in the saints, church architects, musicians, liturgists, hymn writers, martyrs, apologists, and moral, dogmatic and ascetic theologians ; for each of these is the fruit of the special development of some one of these gifts.

Further, the Seven Gifts elicit from the natural and supernatural virtues seven forms of spiritual activity whereby the character and lineaments of the perfect man are manifested, *i. e.*, the seven Beatitudes ; for in them our Blessed Lord sets forth in action the perfect Manhood of the second Adam.

VI

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost

THE gifts of the Holy Ghost are manifested in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the order of their excellence as Isaiah arranges them: Wisdom, Understanding, etc.; but the order of their operation in us is the very opposite, as the Psalmist tells us when he says, “The fear of the Lord is the *beginning* of wisdom.”¹ The fear of the Lord is thus the central stem of the seven-branched candlestick of Zechariah. Let us, therefore, take it first for our consideration.

I. *Holy Fear*.—We must not think of the spirit of Holy Fear as implying terror or servile fear of God. It means

¹ Ps. 111: 10.

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a solemn awe, a profound reverence for God, which is the very foundation of all true worship. It was the special virtue of the Old Testament dispensation, as we shall see by referring to a concordance and looking up the passages in the Old Testament in which it is mentioned. The following beautiful passage from one of the Apocryphal books is well worthy of our study : “The fear of the Lord is honour, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of rejoicing. The fear of the Lord maketh a merry heart, and giveth joy, and gladness, and a long life. Whoso feareth the Lord, it shall go well with him at the last, and he shall find favour in the day of his death. To fear the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”¹

For the sake of clearness it will be

¹ Ecclesiasticus 1 : 11-14.

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well, in the treatment of each of the Seven Gifts, to follow the same method, considering, first, its perfect manifestation in our Blessed Lord ; then, its corporate manifestation in His Church ; and lastly, its individual manifestation in ourselves.

1. As manifested perfectly in our Lord's life, Holy Fear may be studied :

(a) In His perfect worship of God. This is seen in His reply to Satan in the Temptation : "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve";¹ in His exceeding reverence and carefulness in prayer ; for we read that "He went up into a mountain apart to pray";² and that "in the days of His flesh, . . . He . . . offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and

¹ S. Matt. 4:10.

² S. Matt. 14:23.

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was heard in that He feared.”¹ The word translated “feared” in this last passage is not the ordinary word for fear, but one which in Christian usage has come to mean the highest reverence. In classical Greek the underlying idea in the word is that of a careful taking hold of, and handling a precious but fragile vessel which might easily be broken. The word is used but twice in the New Testament, here and in Hebrews 12 : 28, but it expresses better, perhaps, than any other Greek word precisely what we mean by Holy Fear,—a solemn awe which leads to careful reverence in dealing with the things of God, and especially to recollectedness in times of prayer.

(b) In that perfect dependence upon His Father, which is the key-note of our Lord’s life: “My meat is to do the will

¹ Heb. 5 : 7.

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of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work”;¹ “Father, . . . I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do.”²

(c) In His perfect submission to His Father’s will: “Father, . . . not My will, but Thine, be done.”³

(d) In His hatred of sin and evil.

2. The corporate manifestation of Holy Fear may be studied in the Church as the spirit which should control the Church in dealing with questions of morals. The spirit of the world is a spirit of expediency; that of the Church should be the spirit of Holy Fear; *e. g.*, in Plato’s Republic gross sin was tolerated from expediency, but the Church should know nothing of expediency when she is face to face with

¹ S. John 4:34.

² S. John 17:4.

³ S. Luke 22:42.

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God's eternal and immutable moral law. In our own day this is exemplified especially in regard to the questions of divorce, business morality, and political expediency, which are dealt with quite differently by the laws of the Church and those of the world.

3. Lastly, we may study in ourselves the individual manifestation of Holy Fear:

(a) There is a fear which hath torment, as S. John tells us; and this fear perfect love casts out.¹ And yet even this fear has its use, as S. Augustine points out in his beautiful comment on this verse. He uses the illustration of a needle and thread, and says, in effect, that the thread is introduced by means of the needle. The needle goes in first and punctures the stuff which is to be sewed, but except it be drawn out the

¹ Cf. 1 S. John 4:18.

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thread does not come into its place. So sometimes a servile fear of God is necessary to pierce the sinner's heart. The thought of God's justice in dealing with sin, a realization of the fearfulness of eternal punishment, has been the first step toward that change by which many a great sinner has become a great saint. The needle of fear pierced the sinful heart, and made it possible for the thread of love to enter and take possession of that heart. In sewing, the needle is drawn out but the thread is left, holding all the work together. So, S. Augustine tells us, even a servile fear which hath torment may prepare the way for that perfect love which casteth out fear.

(b) The lack of Holy Fear is often the cause of bad devotions. It has been said that there are generally three elements to be traced in bad

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prayers: (i) want of preparation, (ii) petulance of petition, and (iii) thankless oblivion after our prayers. And Holy Fear is the remedy for all three. Holy Fear will forbid us approaching the throne of grace in prayer without some preparation, without some act of recollection by which we realize that we are about to speak to God. Then, again, it will not allow us to make our petitions as though they were the peevish complaints of a spoiled child, instead of the humble prayers of a creature to its Creator and God. Too often we rise from our knees, having prayed, perhaps, for strength against the temptation to a besetting sin, and go out to our day's work to meet the temptation with an entire forgetfulness of what we have asked. God heard our prayer, and gave us the

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grace to conquer the temptation, but when it came we were thinking so little about what we had asked of Him that we did not use the grace which He had bestowed upon us in answer to our prayer. Holy Fear would save us from falling into this error.

(c) Holy Fear is the opposite of the sin of Pride; its fruit is the first Beatitude, “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”; and its prayer is the first petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Hallowed be Thy Name.”

(d) We see the helpfulness of Holy Fear, (i) in the worship of heaven, which is reverent and filled with awe: “The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their

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crowns before the throne";¹ (ii) in the worship of the saints, which is so reverent, so full of recollection, so ecstatic, so unlike our wandering thoughts and irreverent, comfortable postures. In the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord "fell on His face," "fell on the ground," "kneeled down" and prayed. But we too often adopt the most comfortable posture for our prayers,—an aid, not to recollection, but to sleep.

(e) Another result of Holy Fear is reserve in speech, and therefore the avoidance of many, many sins of the tongue.

(f) The fear of God delivers us from all other fear: (i) from worldly fear which often induces us to offend God rather than to lose position or money; (ii) from carnal fear which

¹ Rev. 4: 10.

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draws us into sin to avoid inconvenience or pain; (iii) from servile fear, the spirit of slaves; and (iv) from natural fear or moral cowardice.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Holy Fear is the first of those steps of the ladder of sanctity, of which the last and highest is Wisdom, and by which we mount up to our perfection. Holy Fear, then, is the foundation of the spiritual life. Let us pray earnestly for the spirit of Holy Fear.

In the last chapter we pointed out that though each individual receives all Seven Gifts, yet in certain persons a special development of some one gift may be traced, which produces a characteristic fruit for the edification of the Church. The particular fruit produced by Holy Fear is that class which we call “the Saints,”

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who manifest a special love and reverence for God.

II. *True Godliness*.—The gift which our Prayer-book calls “true godliness” represents the Latin *pietas*, which is very nearly our word piety. The Latin form, however, has a shade of meaning which is lost in its English dress, for *pietas* signifies that spirit of filial affection which a child has for its parents, and so indicates our duty to God as our Father. With this explanation, we shall throughout this chapter speak of this gift as Piety rather than True Godliness, because to the latter term it is difficult to assign any distinct meaning.

The gift of Piety teaches us to honour God as our Father, and to love Him with a tender affection which finds its happiness in trying to do all things to please Him ; so that if others

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wonder at our giving so much time to His service, we may reply in the words of our Lord, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?”¹

1. We may trace the perfect manifestation of this gift in our Blessed Lord.

(a) For He as Man came to fulfil that ideal worship in which Adam failed. Adam was to have been the priest of Creation, offering Creation’s worship to God; but through sin he failed in the fulfilment of this office. The second Adam, our Lord Jesus Christ, became “a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec,” and He is not only our High Priest, but a merciful and compassionate High Priest;² for without sympathy between man and the object of his adoration there can be no true worship. The Incarna-

¹ S. Luke 2: 49.

² Cf. Heb. 2: 17.

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tion is a channel through which the love and compassion of God flows down upon the hearts of men, as God says by Hosea, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love."¹

(b) Further, our Lord's whole life was consecrated to the service of His Father, as we have already pointed out.²

2. In its corporate manifestation in the Church, Piety is the gift which produces the practical worship of the Church. To it, therefore, may be traced the liturgies and service books of the Church, its hymnody, music, ceremonies, vestments, church architecture, etc.

3. In ourselves Piety will exhibit itself in personal habits of reverence and devotion of body, soul and spirit. It

¹ Hos. 11: 4.

² Cf. S. John 4: 34; S. Luke 2: 49.

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will, therefore, check our wandering thoughts, forbid irreverent postures and peevish complainings in our prayers. It is the gift which will enable us to say from our hearts that great petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Will be done"; for it teaches us to accept the sorrows and pains of life as permitted by a Father Who sends them to us in love, and to Whose Will it is our greatest joy to submit. It also saves us from the danger of despair when we fall into sin, since it enables us to come to God as our Father, with the humble confidence of a child asking pardon. Moreover, it will lead us to seek numberless ways of expressing our love for God in acts of worship, and so will save our religious life from that coldness by which so many lives are spoiled.

The gift of Piety has perhaps pro-

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duced a greater variety of material fruits than any other gift ; for to it, as we have already indicated, we may trace the glorious architecture of our churches, their liturgies, their hymnody, and the sacred music used in Divine Service. The filial love of the Catholic Christian has ever striven to express itself by making the Church and its Services in all their details, as beautiful as possible, and has led him to feel that nothing can be too costly for God's service.

III. *Ghostly Strength*.—The gift of Ghostly Strength, or Might, not only supplies the soul with strength to carry out that which it knows to be its duty, but also gives us a spirit of fortitude or supernatural energy which enables us to overcome our own weakness, and to triumph over the difficulties, dangers and trials which we have to meet.

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1. We find this gift manifested perfectly in Christ throughout His life, but its grandest exhibition was in His Cross and Passion wherein He reigned, indeed, as the King of Martyrs. The source of His fortitude was this very gift poured in its fulness upon His Sacred Manhood, so that, as we are told, upon one occasion He was “led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil,”¹ and conquered.

2. In the Church we see its corporate manifestation (*a*) in the martyrdoms of the ages of persecution, (*b*) in the active missionary work of the Church, and (*c*) in the struggle she has made to preserve the faith whole and undefiled in times of unbelief, and to keep morals pure in ages of luxury, when expediency rather than truth

¹ S. Matt. 4:1.

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was the moral standard of the world.

3. In individuals Ghostly Strength is manifested by the power which enables us to say with S. Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."¹

Fortitude is one of the cardinal or natural virtues, and includes the virtue or military valour of the soldier and the calm moral courage of the philosopher. Moral courage is something greater than mere physical courage, but spiritual courage is higher still, for it is this gift of the Holy Ghost which we call Ghostly Strength, and which we may consider the special gift of Confirmation. It bestows upon us courage to think, to act and to suffer for what is true and right. It is the very opposite to the deadly sin of sloth; its

¹ Phil. 4:13.

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fruit is righteousness, and its prayer is “Thy Kingdom come.” We see its special development in “the Martyrs” who suffered for the truth’s sake.

IV. *Knowledge*.—We pass now from the moral gifts which aid the will, to those which perfect the intellect. The intellect works in two ways; *speculatively* in the realm of thought, *practically* in that of action.

A man may have a brilliant speculative intellect, and so be a deep thinker, yet he may be wanting in that practical gift which we call “common sense,” and which directs the ordinary actions of life. On the other hand, a man may have a good practical intellect, which may manifest itself in ordinary life, and yet may be wanting in the higher mental power, the speculative gift, which would make him a distinguished thinker. Of the four in-

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Intellectual gifts of the Spirit, Wisdom and Understanding perfect the speculative intellect, Counsel and Knowledge the practical intellect.

Of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost Knowledge is in some respects the most difficult to define. Even theologians differ with regard to it, since it is not easy to distinguish it from the other intellectual gifts, Wisdom, Understanding and Counsel, and from the supreme virtue of Faith. S. Augustine confines this gift chiefly to that knowledge of creatures which is so necessary for our practical life in this world. By it he considers that the Holy Ghost shows us all creatures in their true light: on the one hand, divesting riches, honours and pleasures of their unreal glitter, and showing us how transient they are, and how dangerous often to our salvation; on the

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other, enabling us to realize the true uses of affliction and adversity.

1. We see this gift exhibited perfectly in our Lord, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."¹ Our Lord as Man knew God, knew man and all the creatures, and always used them for His Father's glory. He taught as one having authority,² and He commanded His Apostles to teach nations a definite creed.

2. In the Church this gift is seen in that she fulfils her function as a teaching Church. She has definite doctrines to impart, both at home and in her missionary work.

3. In the individual, as we have indicated, the gift of Knowledge supplies us with that practical common sense in regard to the creatures around us and to the problems of life as they

¹ Col. 2:3.

² S. Matt. 7:29.

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arise, which enables us to deal with them wisely.

Satan uses the creatures as the instruments of nearly all his temptations, but always by deceiving us about them, as he deceived Eve about the forbidden fruit. The gift of Knowledge enables us to know good and evil in creatures, that is, to distinguish it in them.

This gift also teaches us to use all creatures as steps of the ladder by which we mount up to God, Who in His love created them for our use. It enables us to use aright the Benedicite which the Three Holy Children sang in the furnace of fire. In it they call upon the creatures, good and evil, to glorify God, and enable them to do so by using them in God's service. They could sing in the midst of the flames, "O ye fire and heat, bless ye the Lord ; praise Him, and magnify Him for-

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ever." And the gift of Knowledge will enable us so to endure the fires of temptation that by them we may be proved and God may be glorified.

Lastly, the gift of Knowledge enables us to know God by means of creatures; that is, to rise from the knowledge of secondary causes to God, Who is the First and Universal Cause of all things.

It is difficult to decide what class of men in the Church this gift specially produces. Some have thought "the Apologists," who, by practical common sense combined with learning, have met and dealt with the attacks upon Christianity.

V. *Counsel*.—We have already pointed out that of the four intellectual gifts two, Wisdom and Understanding, perfect the speculative, and two, Counsel and Knowledge, the practical intel-

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lect. Of the latter, we have treated the gift of Knowledge, and must now turn our consideration to that of Counsel. We all value in every-day life the cardinal virtue of prudence. The gift of Counsel is supernatural prudence, the divinely illuminating prudence of the Holy Ghost, guiding and directing us in all the difficulties of life, and especially in those which concern the soul.

By the gift of Counsel we are enabled to distinguish not merely between things good and evil, but in different possibilities of action (all in themselves good) to see which is the best. A Christian ought not to require any special gift to enable him to choose between good and evil, but he does often need the gift of Counsel to help him to determine out of many paths, all in themselves permissible, which is the

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best; that is, which will tend most to God's glory and his own sanctification.

Perhaps the most striking and important illustration of this is concerned with the question of our Vocation. By Vocation we mean, of course, primarily, God's call to a certain work or state of life. Our first vocation is to be Christians; but there open out before us many paths in which we can live Christian lives, and follow our Blessed Lord, and probably the most solemn moment of our life is when we are called upon to choose from these paths, all of them in themselves legitimate, the one which God especially means for us, and which is therefore our Vocation. Men can serve God acceptably in many fields of work; as doctors, lawyers, business men, clergymen, missionaries, etc.; but we each of us have to ask, In which of these fields can I *best* serve

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God, that is, to which of these works is He calling *me*? and in reaching a decision, upon which so much in our life depends, we need especially that gift of the Holy Ghost which we call the gift of Counsel.

While the choice of Vocation is probably the most important decision we have to make in life, it is by no means the only one in which we need God's guidance; indeed, there are constantly arising problems which cannot be solved merely by principles of right and wrong. As we have said, what is wrong must be at once rejected, if we are Christians; but there are many things which are not intrinsically wrong and yet may lead us very far away from the path of duty. These matters, too, concern not only ourselves but others for whom we are responsible; for instance, the conduct of

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parents affects their children, of masters their servants, of rulers their subjects, of pastors their flock; and those who have to make decisions by which others as well as themselves may be affected, above all need to seek the guidance of the Holy Ghost by using this gift of Counsel.

1. We see this gift in its perfect manifestation in our Blessed Lord's life. He counselled His disciples (and Himself set the example) not to cast their pearls before swine.¹ Even to the disciples themselves He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."² Isaiah³ prophesied that His Name should be called "Counsellor." We read His counsels in the words of the Evangelists, and hear them in the liv-

¹ Cf. S. Matt. 7: 6.

² S. John 16: 12.

³ Is. 9: 6.

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ing voice of His Church. As the Psalmist says, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."¹

2. In its corporate manifestation in the Church the gift of Counsel is exhibited in the consultative and deliberative work of the Church in her councils and synods, especially in her œcumenical councils.

3. In individuals this gift is displayed in many ways.

(a) As the natural virtue of prudence leads men to act wisely in temporal matters, so Counsel teaches them to make wise decisions in regard to those things which concern the soul.

(b) The clergy need it especially in their pastoral office in advising those in doubt and difficulty, and guiding all committed to their charge in paths of

¹ Ps. 73: 24.

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holiness. It is the gift which parents should specially cultivate by earnest prayer, that they may both in word and example lead their children in the right way.

(c) The special development of this gift has produced the “Moral Theologians” of the Church, and those bishops and priests who have adorned her pastoral office.

VI. *Understanding*.—Wisdom and understanding together perfect the speculative intellect, and by the speculative intellect we mean the domain of thought as distinguished from the practical intellect which moves in that of action, and is, as we have seen, perfected by Counsel and Knowledge. While in common language we use these two words, Wisdom and Understanding, as synonymous, yet we must carefully observe that they represent

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very different gifts of the Holy Ghost. Wisdom differs from Understanding as the *synthetic* gift does from the *analytic*, as intuitive perception does from logical induction. Understanding is the analytical or logical faculty of the soul, and exists quite apart from any gift of the Holy Ghost. What we mean by the "gift of Understanding" is the action of the Holy Spirit upon this faculty. We may illustrate the faculty of Understanding by the action of a prism. We can take a ray of sunlight and by the use of a prism break it up into its component colours. The sunbeam appears to us perfectly white, but when, by the use of a prism, it is broken up into its constituent parts we find that it consists of the seven colours of the spectrum ; in other words, the prism enables us to analyze the sunbeam and separate it into its various

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colours. Similarly Understanding is the analytic faculty of the soul. It enables us to deduce conclusions from premises; for instance, from the doctrine of the Incarnation to deduce the various truths which are included in it, and to see a truth in its different aspects.

1. We see this gift perfectly manifested in our Blessed Lord in His teaching office. “For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”¹ When He was but twelve years of age the doctors and those that heard Him in the temple “were astonished at His understanding.”² And Nicodemus, when he came to our Lord by night, doubtless voiced the common opinion when he said, “Rabbi, we know that Thou art a *teacher* come from God.”³

¹S. Matt. 7: 29. ²S. Luke 2: 47. ³S. John 3: 2.

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2. We may study the corporate manifestation of this gift in the Church in her work as a teacher, in the drawing up of the creeds and in the promulgation of her various doctrines.

3. We see it in the individual in the capacity for knowing God ; for the gift of Understanding enables the soul to know God better in His ineffable perfections. It is the gift most needed by the theologian. Our Lord said to His disciples, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven";¹ that is, the mysteries of redemption and grace. It enables us also to know Him in the richness of His love as manifested in His mysterious dealings with the soul, and therefore to recognize the workings of His providence in the world.

¹ S. Matt. 13: 11.

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By this gift we are enabled to understand Holy Scripture in the various meanings which underlie the letter ; *i. e.*, the literal, moral, and mystical senses of Holy Scripture.

Prayer is the great means of enlarging this gift. So the Psalmist prays, “Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law ; yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart” ; and again, “O give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments” ; and yet again, “Give me understanding, according to Thy word.”¹

This gift has produced the “Dogmatic Theologians” of the Church ; for Understanding may be considered as the analytic gift by which, when we study any revealed truth, we are enabled to see it in all its parts and in its right relation to other truths.

¹ Ps. 119 : 34, 73, 169.

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VII. *Wisdom*.—Wisdom is the highest of all the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the topmost round in the ladder of which Holy Fear is the first step; as the Psalmist teaches us, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”¹ It reveals God in His inner life and perfections, and the mystery of His Being, so far as the creature can comprehend it. It was the gift which enabled a Galilean fisherman to write the prologue to S. John’s Gospel. As we have seen, it differs from the gift of Understanding as the synthetic differs from the analytic, as the intuitive differs from the logical, gift. The principal idea connected with this gift is spiritual intuition, that wisdom which cometh down from above.²

This idea is suggested by the Latin

¹ Ps. iii: 10.

² Cf. S. James 3: 15, 17.

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word for wisdom, *sapientia*; for the first meaning of the verb *sapere* is “to taste”; its secondary meaning is to have good taste, to have sense or discernment, and this implies intuition, not deductive processes. If salt or sugar be put in our mouth, the sense of taste instantly enables us to detect the difference between them. In the same way the gift of Wisdom enables us intuitively to perceive the difference between good and evil. It is a higher gift than Understanding; since “to taste honey is better than to know its sweetness.”

1. We see the perfect manifestation of this gift in our Lord’s life in everything He said and did. Those who heard Him teaching in the synagogue were astonished, saying, “From whence hath this man these things?

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and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him ? ”¹

2. We see its corporate manifestation in the Church, especially in those spiritual precepts by which she guides the souls of her people.

3. We see its individual manifestation in that it enables the soul to view God in His perfections directly, and not to rise to Him only through His creatures, as is the case in the gift of Knowledge.

By it we reach God as the First Cause, and from that standpoint look down through the chain of secondary causes by which God works both in the realm of nature and of grace. By it, too, we are enabled to apprehend the fitness and mutual relation of things below. It gives us, as it were, a bird’s-eye view of creatures in their

¹ S. Mark 6: 2; also cf. S. Matt. 13: 54.

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relation to God ; hence, as the synthetic gift, it is contrasted with the gift of Understanding. Understanding only conceives and penetrates and analyzes. Wisdom judges and compares, sees causes, reasons, fitness, and grasps truth as a great whole.

To this gift belongs spiritual sweetness. It enables us to understand the mysteries of grace, and the workings of God in the soul. It causes us to find attraction in prayer and meditation and spiritual exercises ; to see sorrows and trials in relation to their end—our sanctification, and therefore to love them ; to behold the things of time in relation to those of eternity, and therefore to realize the transitoriness of the joys of this life, and the importance of those things which will bear fruit in the life to come.

In its special development it is the

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gift which has produced the “Ascetic Theologians” or spiritual writers of the Church. It is the gift which is especially manifested in the “Imitation of Christ,” by the Blessed Thomas à Kempis; in “The Devout Life,” by S. Francis de Sales; and in the other great ascetic treatises of the saints.

VII

The Fruits of the Spirit

WE have examined the Seven Gifts of the Spirit, and have found that four, Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel and Knowledge, enable us to know what is right, and that three help us to do what is right; or, more accurately, that one, Ghostly Strength, gives us power to do what we know to be right, and the other two, Piety and Holy Fear, enable us to love to do it.

If we are using these gifts of the Holy Spirit in their fulness, the results will be manifest in our daily lives in the fruits which they will produce. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord said, "Ye shall know them by their

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fruits,"¹ and we may apply this principle universally. A tree is known by its fruit. We may be deceived by its foliage, but not by its fruit.

The question of the deepest moment to those who have received the gifts of the Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation is, Are we living the life of the Spirit, yielding ourselves to His gracious influences, obeying His commands, allowing Him to dominate our life, and to guide it? And the only way in which we can satisfactorily answer this question is by examining the fruits of the Spirit as manifested in our lives. S. Paul enumerates nine fruits of the Spirit in the Epistle to the Galatians; for he says, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."² These fruits seem to

¹ S. Matt. 7:16.

² Gal. 5:22, 23.

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fall into three divisions. In the first, we find the fruits of the Spirit as exhibited toward God ; in the second, as manifested toward our neighbour ; in the third, as affecting our own individual life. We must not consider these nine fruits of the Spirit mentioned by S. Paul as exhaustive, but they are certainly representative. Let us examine them, and consider how far we can recognize them in our own conduct.

I. *Love*.—This is the first and highest fruit of the Spirit's work in us. Human nature is a mighty machine. Enormous spiritual powers are poured into it, and the first result of its work ought to be love ; for love secures that all the splendid machinery of our being shall be used for right objects and unselfishly. There are two great forces in the world always in conflict, love

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and sin; two motives of action, unselfishness and selfishness. Love ensures that the *motive* of our actions shall be unselfish. We must begin by loving God because He so loved us. This is what S. Paul means when he says, “The love of Christ constraineth us.”¹ He does not mean that his love for Christ constrained him, but that Christ’s love for him, manifested in His Passion and in dying for him, constrained him to love in return, and to offer his life in Christ’s service. We love God, then, because God first loved us,² and because of this we must also love one another.³

Our Lord said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like

¹ 2 Cor. 5:14.

² Cf. 1 S. John 4:19.

³ Cf. 1 S. John 4:11.

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unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The second commandment was simply the necessary result of the first. It is impossible to love God without loving our neighbour; for the love of God will manifest itself in our conduct toward our neighbour in sympathy, patience and consideration.

II. *Joy*.—The second of the fruits of the Spirit is Joy, the one, perhaps, most overlooked in spiritual life—sometimes it is even regarded as a mark of worldliness; and yet there can be no doubt that it is one of the most important fruits of the Spirit. Without attempting to define joy, may we not say that it is the outward expression of happiness, and happiness in the Christian is the result of living the Christlike life described in the Beatitudes; for the word translated "Blessed" is really "Happy"; "Happy

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are the poor in spirit, the meek," etc. Joy, then, will be the result of living a Christlike life.

Few Christians ever had a harder lot than S. Paul, yet no one speaks of Christian joy more than he does. The manifestation of joy in us has a special influence in attracting people to Christianity. The gloomy Christian is rarely a good missionary of Christ.

Then, too, joy has a special effect upon the work which we do for Christ. As the old proverb teaches us, "The excellence of the work is *cæteris paribus* in proportion to the joy of the workman."

Perhaps, however, the most important function of joy in the Christian is that it does so much to remove that friction which often spoils our lives. Joy is spoken of in the Old Testament under the symbol of oil. Isaiah tells

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us of the oil of joy as a gift of the Messiah;¹ and in the Psalms we read of “the oil of gladness” and of the oil which makes man of a cheerful countenance.² If we take two Christians as an example, one manifesting this gift of the Spirit and the other without it, how different will be both their character and work. One will win every one to Christ by the brightness and happiness of his life; the other will repel many by his gloom: one will do his work enthusiastically and therefore well; the other will do it perhaps from stern duty, but without that enthusiasm which in work leads to perfection. Then, too, with regard to temptation; as a spiritual writer teaches us, cheerfulness is the principal weapon with which to meet temptation.

Joy was the great legacy left the

¹ Cf. Is. 61:3.

² Cf. Ps. 45:8; 104:15.

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world by our Lord out of the sorrows of His Passion ; for He says, “ These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full ” ; and again, “ Your sorrow shall be turned into joy ” ; and again, “ Your joy no man taketh from you.”¹

Joy is one of the great characteristics of nature. The flowers, the birds, the babbling brooks and mighty rivers all tell of joy.

Lastly, we must remember that this joy is quite independent of outward circumstances. It is the joy of a heart ruled by the Holy Spirit ; for S. Paul when in prison in Rome, chained to a soldier, could write to his spiritual children, “ Rejoice in the Lord alway : and again I say, Rejoice.”² Our Baptismal Service teaches us to pray that

¹ S. John 15 : 11 ; 16 : 20, 22.

² Phil. 4 : 4.

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as the result of the Holy Spirit's work in Baptism, the regenerated person may be "joyful through hope." This spirit of joyfulness will often enable us to bring sunshine into the clouded hearts and homes of our fellow men.

III. *Peace*.—The third fruit of the Holy Spirit, the last of the fruits exhibited toward God, is peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee."¹ Peace has been defined as "the tranquillity of order." How we long for peace in the strife of tongues and in the struggle of the world! But we meet with two obstacles to peace: (1) Godlessness. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked."² The spirit of worldliness brings with it anxiety, care, excitement, and is the very opposite of the spirit of peace. There can be, in-

¹ Is. 26:3.

² Is. 57:21.

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indeed, no peace without trust in God. (2) The other obstacle to peace is the devil—Satanic temptation. This must be overcome in the power of grace.

We must observe, however, that peace is one of those words which connotes its opposite—war. We cannot think of peace apart from a conception of its opposite; and, indeed, peace is generally the consequence of war or at least of preparation for war. Nations now at peace have won that peace on the battle-field, and to preserve it are constantly prepared for war. In heaven all now is peace, but we are told that once “there was war in heaven.”¹ On Easter Day Christ came speaking peace unto His people; His greeting was “Peace be unto you”; but He came from the battle-field of Calvary and from the grave as the

¹ Rev. 12:7.

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Conqueror of death. So in the individual soul there can be no peace till its battle has been fought out and victory has been won—the battle against sin; and the peace must be won by penitence and signed by the gift of absolution.

Have we this peace in our lives? There is a false peace which is the result of a cowardly truce with evil. Struggle is better than this false peace, and, indeed, external struggle is not inconsistent with that inner peace which is the fruit of the Spirit.

IV. *Longsuffering*.—The second division of the fruits of the Spirit contains three: Longsuffering, Gentleness and Goodness; and these are exercised chiefly in our conduct toward our neighbour. Longsuffering is closely allied to patience. The difference is that while patience does not easily

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succumb under suffering, longsuffering does not hastily retaliate a wrong. This distinction, however, is not always observed, and we may, perhaps, consider the two as almost synonymous. While longsuffering is exercised chiefly in our conduct to our fellow man, it also has a place in our relation to God and to ourselves: to God in that His method of working with us and helping us often seems to us very slow; to ourselves in our many failures and little progress in spiritual things. It is, however, toward our neighbour that we have the most frequent opportunities of manifesting this fruit, and thus showing that we realize God's longsuffering toward ourselves. There is a beautiful passage in the Epistle of S. Ignatius to Polycarp, in which he exhorts us to bear with all men as Christ

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bears with us.¹ Longsuffering being one of the attributes of God, implies in the Christian a truly godlike character.

V. *Gentleness*.—The next two gifts, Gentleness and Goodness, are so closely allied to each other that it is difficult to distinguish between them. They seem, however, to be related as *benignity* is to *beneficence*, the former being the disposition of character which finds active expression in the latter.

The word translated *gentleness* (*Xρηστότης*) is found in the New Testament only in the writings of S. Paul. It is used by him ten times, being translated in our version by three different words: Kindness, Gentleness and Goodness. The last we may reject as in no sense expressing the idea contained in the original, and we there-

¹ To Polycarp i.

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fore have left gentleness and kindness, both of which fairly represent the Greek word. Two other words which have been suggested, and indeed used in another version, are “benignity” and “sweetness.” Out of this group we must draw our conception of the fruit of the Spirit which we speak of as gentleness. It is that disposition of character which we call graciousness, benevolence, benignity, kindness, an attitude toward our fellow men which issues in the active virtue of beneficence or goodness. It was specially marked in our Blessed Lord’s life in His words; for they all “wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.”¹ We may be quite sure that to every one who sought Him He was gracious and kindly not only in speech but in man-

¹ S. Luke 4:22.

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ner. And what a marvellous power kindness has in influencing those around us! Kindness has been called the pioneer of the Precious Blood; for more souls have been won to Christ by kindness than by eloquence or learning. Those who are engaged in missionary work amongst the sinful well know that the beginning of a conversion has often been a kind word, which has touched the heart, and made a way for teaching that has led to penitence, pardon and peace. How many opportunities we have in our daily life for practicing this gentleness or kindness; at home, abroad, in work and in recreation! There is hardly an hour in the day when this fruit of the Spirit may not be manifested.

VI. *Goodness* (*ἀγαθωσύνη*.)—We have already called attention to the fact that goodness is the active expression of

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gentleness or benignity. There are some who are gentle but never carry their benevolence into action, and there are some, too, who are good in working for others but spoil their work by want of gentleness in their manner.

It may help us in our study of this grace to take one who specially manifested it. We are told of S. Barnabas that "he was a good man";¹ and something more is certainly meant by this than that he was morally "good," as we see in S. Paul's distinction between a righteous man and a good man: "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a *good* man some would even dare to die."² S. Barnabas exhibits in his life both kindness of disposition and practical works of mercy. We see this, first, in his becoming sponsor for S. Paul when

¹ Acts 11: 24.

² Rom. 5: 7.

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he was looked upon with suspicion by the other Apostles;¹ again in his missionary work at Antioch,² and in S. Paul's first missionary journey;³ and in his defense of S. Mark.⁴

Our Lord manifested this grace; for He is spoken of as "anointed . . . with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing *good*."⁵ In this passage we have an indication of what is meant by doing good—He healed those who were oppressed with the devil. Practical goodness, therefore, is summed up in works of mercy, and we learn from our Lord's own lips that we shall all be judged by this standard. In the parable of the sheep and the goats, our Lord, speaking of the corporal works of mercy, said to those

¹ Acts 9: 26, 27.

² Acts 11: 22-26.

³ Acts 13: 14.

⁴ Acts 15: 37-40.

⁵ Acts 10: 38.

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on the right hand, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me”; and to those on the left hand, “Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me.”¹

Do I long to *do* good in this sad world? Then I must begin by *being* good. A young clergyman once wrote to one much older in the ministry, “What can I do to effect a revival of religion in my parish?” The answer he received was, “Revive thyself.”

To whom can I do good? “Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”²

Where can I do good? What is my mission? Perhaps in my own home. How many there are who have a Laz-

¹ S. Matt. 25:40, 45.

² Gal. 6:10.

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arus lying at their door, one, it may be, of their own household, craving possibly for the crumbs of sympathy and kindness more than for temporal help, and they pass him day by day, and go out into the world seeking for work to do for God, when God has provided work for them in their own home life.

VII. *Faith* ($\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}s$).—The word faith here seems not to be used in its theological sense as belief in God, but rather in its passive sense, as trustworthiness, fidelity. And this is the first of the third division of the fruits of the Spirit, which contains those exercised especially toward ourselves in the production of the three characteristics—faithfulness, meekness, and temperance. In Baptism the priest prays for the child that he may “continue Christ’s *faithful* soldier and servant unto his life’s end”; and our Lord from His

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throne in heaven sends us this message: “Be thou *faithful* unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.”¹ This faithfulness must be specially shown in times of temptation; as we see in the history of Joseph, Daniel and the Three Holy Children. If we are faithful to God, we know that He is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able; but will with the temptation make the way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.² We must be faithful in all the various temptations of life. S. Peter teaches faithfulness to the storm-tossed soul; S. Paul, to the troubled intellect; S. Matthew, to the man engrossed in business; S. Mary Magdalene, to the sinful woman; S. Augustine, to the unchastened youth.

VIII. *Meekness* ($\pi \rho \alpha \delta \tau \eta \varsigma$). — The

¹ Rev. 2: 10.

² Cf. 1 Cor. 10: 13.

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Psalmist says, “The meek-spirited shall possess the earth: and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace”;¹ and our Lord in the Beatitudes proclaims, “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”;² and again exhorts, “Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”³

Meekness is often associated in the minds of people with weakness. Nothing can be farther from the truth; for meekness always denotes great strength. Another mistake which is made is that the meek, like the weak, always go to the wall; whereas the special privilege of meekness, our Lord assures us, is to possess the earth. And this is true from experience. The pushing, self-

¹ Ps. 37: 11.

² S. Matt. 5: 5.

³ S. Matt. 11: 29.

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assertive man may sometimes get on by his very assertion, but he generally arouses in every one a feeling of irritation and opposition; whereas the self-contained, meek man in the end gets his own way where the other often fails; and he wins eventually the respect and confidence of his fellow men. Our Lord was specially meek, and yet how strong He was; for all the world recognizes His power.

Meekness, however, is rare and unpopular and often counterfeited. Pride is its great enemy, and humility its foundation; for without humility it cannot exist. But if we are using the gifts of the Holy Spirit, meekness will be one of the fruits which will be manifested in our lives.

IX. *Temperance* (*εὐκράτεια*).—Temperance is the last and crowning fruit of the Spirit, and belongs wholly to

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ourselves. It is that entire self-control which regulates the splendid machinery of our nature, making every part perfectly fulfil its purpose. Temperance is the regulation of all the actions of life; for it must enter into each act that we may not err by excess or by defect. It has been said to consist of three elements; self-reverence, self-knowledge, and self-control. To gain temperance is no easy task, and there are generally two stages in the work. First, self-denial. How important this is! Our Lord said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."¹ While the world is indulging itself with luxuries, and so enervating the will, we are called on to deny ourselves and thus to strengthen our will. It

¹ S. Luke 9: 23.

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is for this reason that the fast days of the Church have their value in their definite teaching of self-denial. This self-denial prepares us to resist the assaults of the devil, just as luxury predisposes us to yield to them.

The second and higher stage of temperance is “self-restraint,” and the sphere in which we must observe it is very comprehensive—eyes, ears, tongue, thoughts, imagination and memory, as well as our lower nature. We need to restrain and mortify many desires.

Temperance not merely leads to great spiritual results, but develops character in other ways. It strengthens the will, leads to concentration of the intellect and to vigour in the body. It is the first conquest of self, of bringing under the dominion of the will all our unruly soldiers and

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servants.¹ And how many they are !

We began our consideration of the fruits of the Spirit with our Lord's words, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." The Holy Spirit is given to us in the Sevenfold Gifts in Baptism and Confirmation. What are the fruits of the Spirit which we can trace in our own lives ? Let us examine our lives carefully, and strive to cultivate especially those which we find to be wanting. Our soul is like a garden, of which Christ is the Owner ; and we can pray no more beautiful prayer than that in the Old Testament : "Awake, O north wind ; and come, thou south ; and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits."²

¹ Cf. S. Matt. 8: 9.

² Cant. 4: 16.

VIII

Penitence

WE have investigated thus far the wonderful effects of Confirmation in impressing a certain character on the soul, and in imparting to us the Seven-fold Gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism and Confirmation together convey to us all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, all that is necessary to enable us to live what S. Paul describes as “the life of the Spirit.” Furthermore, in the last chapter, we examined those fruits which this life of the Spirit ought to produce in us. Now there remains one most important question to be considered, one on which all depends—our penitence.

Confirmation is one of those Sacra-

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ments which require that the recipient should be in a state of grace in order that he may appropriate its benefits ; and a state of grace means either that he has never lost the grace of Baptism through mortal sin, or that if he has been so unfortunate as to have lost it, it has been regained by sincere and thorough repentance.

But what do we mean by mortal sin ? The word itself indicates that it is a sin which destroys grace in the soul, and therefore kills the soul by cutting it off from the life of God ; for grace is the life of God in the soul. We are not to think that all sins do this, or that all sin is mortal ; for S. John tells us that “ there is a sin unto death ” and “ there is a sin not unto death.”¹

Sins not unto death, or, as theologians call them, venial sins (the word

¹ 1 S. John 5: 16, 17.

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venial means pardonable) do not destroy grace nor separate us from God. They are those lesser faults into which we fall constantly, but which are not in themselves very great nor done with deliberation. For these venial sins we may obtain forgiveness by prayer; so that every night when we say our prayers and confess them with real sorrow, we may believe that they are forgiven.

Mortal sins, however, are of a different character. They are sins which are in themselves great, or, as the English Prayer-book calls them, “ weighty matter,”¹ done with a consciousness of their guilt and with deliberation or the consent of the will. While we must pray that these may be forgiven, S. John seems to intimate that prayer by itself is not sufficient to secure their

¹ Visitation of the Sick.

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forgiveness ; for he says, “ There is a sin unto death : I do not say that he shall pray for it,”¹ which seems to mean that in addition to prayer this requires a definite act of repentance.

Before we proceed further with the subject, let us carefully notice the words which the Bishop uses to describe those who are to be confirmed. He says, “ Almighty and everliving God, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these Thy servants by Water and the Holy Ghost, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins ; Strengthen them, we beseech Thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them Thy manifold gifts of grace ; the spirit of wisdom and understanding ; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength ; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness ; and fill

¹ 1 S. John 5: 16.

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them, O Lord, with the spirit of Thy holy fear, now and forever. Amen."¹

This prayer is based upon a statement in regard to our condition, which, if it be not true in our own case, involves not only the loss of the grace of Confirmation, but serious sin against the Holy Ghost. The statement is that God has vouchsafed to regenerate us by water and the Holy Ghost, and has given unto us *forgiveness of all our sins*; in other words, that we are baptized and have so repented as to have secured for ourselves God's pardon. Now we must be quite sure that in our case this is true. We know whether or not we have been baptized. What, however, do we know about the forgiveness of our sins? We certainly must leave nothing undone to ensure this great blessing; for the forgiveness

¹ The Order of Confirmation.

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of our sins is really the most important thing in our lives. When we come to die it will be the one thing upon which our salvation will depend. We, however, cannot afford to leave this question in suspense until the moment of death; but in preparation for our Confirmation we ought so to repent that there may be no doubt in our minds that God has "given unto us the forgiveness of all our sins."

How can we have this assurance of forgiveness? Repentance consists of three parts: Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction. Contrition is a sorrow for sin which arises from love of God; Confession is the acknowledgment of our sin to God; and Satisfaction is chiefly shown in amendment of life. The most important of these three parts is Contrition. If we are really sorry for our sins there is no

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doubt that we shall confess them truly, and earnestly strive to put them away and to serve God more faithfully for the rest of our lives.

In regard to Confession, the Bible tells us that “if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”¹

It is, however, quite evident that if we are to be sorry for our sins, and confess them, we must first know what they are; hence the first step in repentance must be self-examination. We must look back to the beginning of our lives, and recall each period separately—our childhood, our school days, our after-life. Then we should think of the different places where we

¹1 S. John 1: 8, 9.

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have lived, our companions, our principal occupations and pleasures; and consider what sins are associated with each of these.

Our self-examination must be made with a real desire to find out all our sins, and with earnest prayer to the Holy Ghost to show us these sins. It will be a help to us to use questions on the Ten Commandments, such as may be found in most books of devotion. It is best in making this examination to write down the sins which we find out. They are written, we know, in the Book of Judgment. It will be very helpful to us to try to reproduce, however imperfectly, what we know is written in that book. Then we must ask the Holy Ghost to make us truly sorry for our sins, for all penitence is the work of the Holy Ghost; and we must confess our sins

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to God—not only our sinfulness, but the particular thoughts, words and deeds of sin.

If after this we have any doubt whether our sins are forgiven, or need further comfort or counsel, the Prayer-book directs us to go to some discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open our grief, that by the ministry of God's Holy Word we may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of our conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.¹ We are also reminded in the Daily Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church that "Almighty God . . . hath given power, and commandment, to His Ministers, to declare and pronounce to His people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins."

¹ Exhortation in Communion Office.

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One thing we must keep clearly before us, that in order to prepare ourselves rightly for Confirmation we must leave nothing undone to ensure the forgiveness of our sins. We must not allow the Bishop to say of us that God has given to us the forgiveness of all our sins, when our conscience tells us that we have not made such an act of repentance as to render these words true.

IX

The Holy Communion

IT is not the purpose of this book to attempt any adequate treatment of the Holy Communion, and yet we must make some reference to that great Sacrament on which so much of our spiritual life depends, and to which Confirmation is the admission ; for our Church in its Prayer-book enjoins that “there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed; or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.”¹

Without, therefore, touching in any way on the sacrificial aspect of the Holy Eucharist as the central act of Christian worship, or even attempting

¹ Order of Confirmation.

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to treat it at all fully from its sacramental side, we shall content ourselves with a simple statement of what the Holy Communion is in itself, and what it ought to be to each communicant.¹

The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are present under the forms of bread and wine. It was instituted by Him as the means whereby we may (1) continually show forth the sacrifice of the death of Christ until He come,² and (2) may feed upon Him as our spiritual food and nourishment.³ It is the great means by which we may plead, as the central act of Christian worship, the one “full, per-

¹ For a fuller treatment of this subject the author ventures to refer to his “Catholic Faith and Practice, a Manual of Theological Instruction for Confirmation and First Communion” (Longmans, Green & Co.).

² 1 Cor. 11:26.

³ S. John 6:50-59.

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fect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world," offered once for all by Christ upon the Cross; and it is also the food of our spiritual life.

God is the continuous Cause of our being; for He not only brought us into existence by an act of creation, but preserves us in being by a distinct exercise of His Divine power; so that, if God were to cease for one moment to act upon us as the Cause of our being, we should at once cease to exist.

God is, therefore, the First or Efficient Cause of our existence, but He uses creatures as means to carry out His Will in preserving to us the gift of life. For instance, the life of the body, our physical life, is the gift of God, but it is conditioned by the law that we must eat in order to preserve that gift; and food is a creature, taken

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from without into ourselves, and assimilated by us through the processes of digestion. Again, the life of the mind is the gift of God, but this also depends upon food for its development; that is, on the study of creatures outside ourselves, which are taken, as it were, into our intellectual system and digested by the processes of thought and study.

The same is true of that gift of Divine life which was implanted in us in Baptism. In order that it may be preserved and developed it must be fed, and the chief means by which it is fed is the Holy Communion. As without food the body wastes and dies, and without study the mind is dwarfed and stunted and remains undeveloped, so without the Holy Communion the life of grace in the soul cannot grow, and is even in danger of extinction.

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Our Blessed Lord asserts this most emphatically in the passage to which we have referred,¹ leading up to the tremendous statement, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

As soon then as possible after our Confirmation we should make our first Communion, and with it register the resolution that to the end of our days our Communions shall be made regularly and with careful preparation, and shall be regarded as the most important duty of our life.

The preparation for our first Communion will be the same as for our Confirmation except that we shall need

¹ S. John 6:50-59.

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to study carefully the Church's teaching in regard to the Holy Eucharist. But for our ordinary Communions our preparation will fall under three heads: (1) Faith; (2) Purity; and (3) Prayer.

1. *Faith*.—“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.”¹ We must approach our Communions with faith; that is, not merely with an intellectual acceptance of the doctrine of our Lord's Real Presence in the Sacrament, but with a sincere effort to realize this as a fact. We must come “discerning the Lord's body.”² And to this end, in our preparation for Communion, we should make many acts of faith; that is, we should tell our Lord how truly and fully we desire to believe what He has revealed to us of His Presence in this great mystery. The repetition of some of

¹ Heb. 10:22.

² 1 Cor. 11:29.

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the great Eucharistic hymns of the Church will be found very serviceable for this purpose.

2. *Purity.*—“ Let us draw near . . . having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”¹ If it was said to those whose work it was to carry the vessels of the temple, “ Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord,”² how much more is it said to those who bear not the vessels, but the Lord Himself ! To effect this purity we must make a careful self-examination of our lives since our last Communion, and make acts of contrition and confession ; for we must never venture to approach our Communion but with a belief that God has forgiven us our many sins—a belief which can be based only upon our own earnest repentance.

¹ Heb. 10 : 22.

² Is. 52 : 11.

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3. *Prayer*.—There must be not only the preparation of faith and purity, but also that of prayer. S. Mary Magdalene and the other holy women on Easter Day brought sweet spices with which to anoint the Body of their Lord ; and these spices may be taken as signifying to us the offering of prayers in our preparation for the Holy Eucharist. Thus we not only cleanse but adorn the chamber of our soul in preparation for the coming of our Lord.

Further, there is an ancient rule of the Church that the Holy Eucharist should always be received fasting, and the inconvenience of sometimes having to make our Communions late does not abrogate this. Of course, if possible, we should endeavour always to communicate at an early celebration, both because it is more easy to come fasting

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then, and because our minds are at that time more free from distractions.

Regarding this practice of the early Church we cannot have a better witness than S. Augustine, who in his epistle to Januarius says, “It pleased the Holy Ghost to appoint, for the honour of so great a Sacrament, that the Body of the Lord should take the precedence of all other food entering the mouth of a Christian, and it is for this reason that the custom referred to is universally observed.” S. Augustine wrote this about A. D. 400, and we have similar statements at the close of the second century from Tertullian, in the third from S. Cyprian, and in the fourth from SS. Basil, Ambrose, Gregory of Nazianzen, and Chrysostom.

The frequency with which Communion should be made depends very much on the condition of the individ-

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ual soul. The rule of our Church requires that it should be not less than three times a year (of which Easter shall be one); but of course no earnest soul, except perhaps a very young person, would be content to communicate so seldom.

As the Holy Eucharist is the centre of the Church's life, so should our Communions be the acts round which all our spiritual life circles. And they will be so, if we realize the blessings which our Lord loves to bestow upon the faithful soul in Communion.

X

Prayer and the Rule of Life

WE cannot bring this little book to a close without a brief consideration of two things upon which our perseverance and progress in spiritual life will largely depend—Prayer and a Rule of Life. We have considered at some length the effects of the Church's Sacraments, especially of Baptism and Confirmation ; and though we were able to touch upon the Holy Communion but briefly, we pointed out its immense importance in the soul's life. But there are other means of grace besides the Sacraments, and chief among them is Prayer.

Prayer is the atmosphere of the soul's life, the vital air which the soul

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breathes; so that one might as well expect to find a living man who does not breathe as a living Christian who does not pray. The Holy Communion is to the soul what *food* is to the body. But a man needs not only good food, but pure *air*; and if the air which he breathes is vitiated by poisonous exhalations, it will often produce those diseases which are grouped under the general head “malarious,” indicating that they are the result of breathing bad air. The souls of many Christians are doubtless starved by neglect of the Holy Communion, the food of the spiritual life; but probably a still greater number suffer from that spiritual “malaria” which comes from bad prayer. Prayer seems to be and, indeed, is so simple a thing that we forget that even simple things may be done badly.

What is prayer? It is the ascent of

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the soul to God, the link which connects us with God, the ladder by which we climb to heaven. And this seems to be the inspired definition of prayer ; since the Psalmist says, “ Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.”¹

Now there can be no real prayer without a recognition and acknowledgment of dependence and of infirmity, —without, indeed, a sense of our own need. And it is here that so many fail in prayer. They do not come to God “ poor in spirit,”² that is, as “ beggars ” (for this is the literal meaning of the word translated “ poor ” in the first Beatitude). If we realize our dependence on God, this very realization constitutes our greatest claim upon His bounty. But if we approach our prayers in a mechanical, formal, or even patronizing way, telling God of our needs

¹ Ps. 25 : 1.

² S. Matt. 5 : 3.

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in a petulant, complaining spirit, we violate one of the essential conditions of the true suppliant—that he must realize his dependence. Such prayers are unheard and unanswered, because they are really not prayers at all.

To pray aright we need especially to grasp three of God's attributes: His Omniscience, His Omnipotence, and His Love. We must begin by a realization of God's Omniscience, that He sees and knows all things; therefore He knows our needs, our trials, our desire to serve Him, feeble though it be. At the beginning of our prayers it is well to make an act of faith in God's Omniscience; to say, for instance, "I am in God's Presence; He sees and knows me as though I were the only child of man for whom He had to care; I must therefore be very reverent in His Presence, and keep my thoughts

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intently fixed on my prayer.” Again, we should make an act of faith in God’s Omnipotence. God not only knows my needs, but He is able to supply them and help me to the uttermost. There is no limit to His power. And then, further, God is Love. If, therefore, what I ask is indeed for my good, He will give it; and, if He withholds it, it is because it is not really good for me, or perhaps because I need the discipline of waiting and of continuing to pray for a while—perhaps for a long while—before He grants my petition. But whether bestowed or withheld it will always be a manifestation of God’s love, always be for my ultimate benefit.

If we really believe in God’s Omnipotence, Omnipotence, and Love, we shall find prayer a source of joy and strength. Bad prayers are gener-

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ally the result of a want of realization of God's character. We ignore His Omniscience and give way to wandering thoughts, or forget His Omnipotence and consequently doubt His power to help, or His Love and therefore His will to help.

We must keep before us the true purpose of prayer, which is not always to obtain what we ask, but *always* to enable us to do the Will of God. We must remember, too, that prayer is the motive power of spiritual life. A watch may be constructed with great skill, and the works may be in excellent order, but if it is not wound up it will not go. Prayer is the winding up of the mechanism of our spiritual nature, the storing of the force by which our work for God is to be done.

There are several kinds of prayer, such as Verbal, Vocal, Mental, and

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Ejaculatory. Verbal prayer is that prayer in which the words express more or less accurately our desires. Vocal prayer is the use of the voice in the utterance of inspired words, even though we do not fully comprehend them; such as, for instance, the recitation of the Psalms, some verses of which exactly express our feelings, while others only partially so, yet all are the inspired prayers of the Holy Ghost; such, too, are the Public Services of the Church. Mental prayer, or Meditation, is the prayer of our spiritual nature or mind, without any utterance of words; while Ejaculatory prayer is the use of short sentences or aspirations which in moments of temptation can be hurled like weapons at our foe (the word from which Ejaculatory is derived signifies to throw a javelin). We have

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a good example of Ejaculatory prayer in the Prayer-book Versicles ; “ O God, make speed to save us,” “ O Lord, make haste to help us.”

Lastly, a few words about a Rule of Life. Few people, probably, realize the great importance of rule in the spiritual life. Our life in the world could hardly go on without rule. In every department of business a well-arranged system is almost a necessary condition of success, and this implies a set of rules.

The advantage of a rule in spiritual life is manifold. It helps us to form habits which belong to the spiritual life ; and the formation of habits leads to the development of character ; for our character is the resultant of all the forces for good and evil which have previously acted upon us. Intermittent forces leave little mark

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upon our character, compared with the effects of the habits of our life. And the character which we form in this world will be either our glory in heaven or our misery in hell.

Disorder has always more or less of the nature of sin. We can hardly think of a holy life which is not an orderly life. It has been said that “Order is heaven’s first law,” and certainly we cannot conceive of heaven as a place of confusion and disorder.

Order is especially valuable in giving coherence and durability to work ; for that which is done in a spasmodic, disorderly way has seldom much permanent effect. A disorderly life may be a very active life, but it will seldom be an effective life.

All this is as true of spiritual duties as of our work in the world. If our spiritual life is to be an effective life,

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it must be an orderly life ; and nothing conduces more to order than a definite rule ; hence the value of a rule of spiritual life.

Such a rule should be very *definite*. We should determine precisely what things we will always do ; such as, to say our prayers every morning and every evening, to read our Bible every day, to make our Communion every week or fortnight or month. Then it should be *generous*. We should not be content merely to make a rule about things which cost us no effort whatever, but rather about such duties as will develop in us a Christlike life. But while our rule should be generous, above all things it must be *prudent*. We must not undertake more than we can really do ; and it is better to begin with a very simple rule, and perhaps each year to add something to it.

Prayer and the Rule of Life

This would ensure real progress in our spiritual things ; for we must not look upon our Confirmation and its preparation as the end of our religious life, but rather as its beginning.

May God grant to all who use this little book that the preparation for Confirmation and the beginning of the life of Communion may be earnest and sincere ; but still more, that the growth in spiritual things may be continuous, and that their fruition may be glorious.

LAUS DEO

Appendix

Devotions for Every Day in Preparation for Confirmation

Veni, Creator Spiritus

COME, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire ;
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart :

Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life, and fire of love ;
Enable with perpetual light
The dulness of our blinded sight :

Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of Thy grace :
Keep far our foes, give peace at home ;
Where Thou art Guide no ill can come.

Teach us to know the FATHER, SON,
And THEE, of Both, to be but ONE ;
That through the ages all along
This may be our endless song,
Praise to Thy eternal merit,
FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT. *Amen.*

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Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Come, Thou HOLY SPIRIT, come,
And from Thy celestial home
 Shed a ray of light Divine ;
Come, Thou Father of the poor,
Come, Thou source of all our store,
 Come, within our bosoms shine.

Thou of Comforters the best,
Thou the soul's most welcome guest,
 Sweet refreshment here below ;
In our labour rest most sweet,
Grateful coolness in the heat,
 Solace in the midst of woe.

O most Blessèd Light Divine,
Shine within these hearts of Thine,
 And our inmost being fill ;
Where Thou art not, man hath nought,
Nothing good in deed or thought,
 Nothing free from taint of ill.

Heal our wounds ; our strength renew ;
On our dryness pour Thy dew ;
 Wash the stains of guilt away ;
Bend the stubborn heart and will,
Melt the frozen, warm the chill ;
 Guide the steps that go astray.

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On the faithful, who adore
And confess Thee, evermore
 In Thy sevenfold gifts descend ;
Give them virtue's sure reward,
Give them Thy salvation, Lord,
 Give them joys that never end. *Amen.*

GENERAL PRAYERS

O God, Who didst teach the hearts
of Thy faithful people, by sending to
them the light of Thy Holy Spirit ;
grant us by the same Spirit to have a
right judgment in all things, and ever
more to rejoice in His holy comfort ;
through the merits of Christ Jesus our
Saviour, Who liveth and reigneth with
Thee, in the unity of the same Spirit,
one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Collect for Whitsunday.

Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings
with Thy most gracious favour, and
further us with Thy continual help ;
that in all our works begun, continued,

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and ended in Thee, we may glorify Thy holy Name, and finally by Thy mercy obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Collect from the Communion Office.

O God, Who art the author and giver of all good; we humbly beseech Thee to bring home to our hearts the deep solemnity of this time of preparation for Confirmation, that we may use it well. Give us diligence in studying the teachings of Thy Church, a docile heart that we may practice what we learn, and grant us grace to consecrate our lives anew to Thy service; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

O God the Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful, Whose work it is to

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perfect us in all goodness ; we beseech Thee to strengthen us with Thy Seven-fold Gifts : the Spirit of Wisdom, that we may recognize the transitoriness of this world, and love the things that are eternal ; the Spirit of Understanding, that we may have a more perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Faith ; the Spirit of Counsel, to enable us to make a right choice in all that pertains to our salvation ; the Spirit of Knowledge, that we may know Thy will ; grant us, also, the Spirit of Ghostly Strength, that, knowing what is right and true, we may do those things that are pleasing to Thee ; the Spirit of true Godliness, that we may be loving and devout in Thy service ; and the Spirit of Holy Fear, that we may be filled with holy reverence, and may fear in any way to displease Thee. Grant this, we pray Thee, Who livest

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and reignest with the Father and the Son, one God, world without end.
Amen.

FOR CONTRITION

O Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour, whom I have betrayed and denied and crucified so many times by my sins; how wonderful has been Thy love and patience! how deep has been my ingratitude! Pierce my heart, O Lord, with true sorrow for my sins, that I may worthily lament them and truly confess them. Deliver me, O Lord, from blood-guiltiness, in that I have by my sins shed Thy Precious Blood. O let it be on me, not to my condemnation, but to cleanse me from all my guilt, Who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. *Amen.*

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